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On the Cover: Vera Nemchinova as the Woman in Blue in *Les Biches*, ca. 1924. Bronislava Nijinska Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress (054.00.00).

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Notes from the Editor

193 Richard Wagner at Two Hundred
Leon Botstein

American Musics

207 The Lavender Cowboy and "The She Buckaroo": Gene Autry, Patsy Montana, and Depression-Era Gender Roles
Stephanie Vander Wel

Music and Culture

252 General Meredith Read and Claude Debussy's *Marche Écossaise*
Marie Rolf

299 Camp in Francis Poulenc's Early Ballets
Christopher Moore

343 Reaching a *Plus Grand Public*: Georges Auric as Populist
Colin Roust

The Twentieth Century and Beyond

368 Narrative, Interpretation, and the Popular Song
Keith Negus

Texts and Contexts

396 How Moral Is *Fidelio*? Didacticism in the Finales of Beethoven's *Leonore* Operas
Martin Nedbal

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Notes from the Editor

Richard Wagner at Two Hundred

Leon Botstein

Hyperbole persists for a reason. Circumstances and (more often than we suspect) blunt facts invite it. Consider the case of Richard Wagner, master of hyperbole himself. The bicentennial celebrations of his birth in 2013 will bring along exorbitant claims, one of which may well be justified. No composer in Western history before Wagner or since has exerted as powerful an influence on music, culture, and history. Few artists of any sort, much less composers, have inspired so much fierce commitment, controversy, and commentary—and for so long. In Wagner's hands, art became a truly significant dimension of history.

It is a small irony that Verdi—Wagner's equal as composer for the operatic stage, and often regarded as Wagner's rival and polar opposite—was born the same year. The Verdi–Wagner contrast among opera enthusiasts and commentators, somewhat like the Brahms–Wagner dichotomy, derived its impetus less from striking audible differences in their work than from the now barely imaginable significance and passion that partisan allegiances concerning aesthetic matters once inspired. The era of the lives and careers of both composers, the mid-nineteenth century, was one when philosophical and political claims regarding music were taken seriously and transcended the realm of mere taste. Musical culture was a defining aspect of meaning with respect to personal life and the public realm. This lent prestige to musical culture and to the ideas and actions of professional musicians.

The passage of time and the character of culture since the end of the nineteenth century, however, have eroded this state of affairs and certainly the sense of urgency associated with what happens in music. It has also dulled the sharpness in contrasts. We are aware more of how much Wagner and Verdi are comparable and cut, so to speak, from the same historical cloth. Even a century ago, a now self-evident common ground made it natural for performers to have both in their repertory (one thinks of the young Toscanini, for example). Verdi and Puccini may still maintain a stronger hold on the popular imagination with

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respect to what passes for opera than Wagner. Yet Verdi (or, for that matter, Puccini) and his works never sparked such resentment, inspired so much prose, wielded influence, or engendered fanaticism the way Wagner did in his lifetime, and still does.

The incredible popularity that Wagner enjoys today is particularly astonishing. Why is he, as it were, so much in fashion? Expensive and lavish productions of the *Ring* Cycle can be found the world over. The newest Metropolitan Opera *Ring*, whatever its merits, bears witness that Wagner is the darling of the notorious 1 percent of wealth, the very rich patrons of opera, for whom no cost seems too great. Wagner would have been delighted to have had such patronage and pick such deep pockets to gratify his megalomaniacal visions of the experience of the theater. Indeed, one of Wagner's most progressive (if not prophetic) and modern qualities was his gift for self-promotion, publicity, and fundraising. His capacity to raise and spend money, best exemplified by his manipulation of Ludwig II and the brilliance of the Bayreuth patronage schemes, revealed an uncanny second sense of how the business of music needed to be handled in the context of industrialized urban economies. Wagner makes today's publicists look like amateurs. In fairness, however, they have far less to sell.

Today's versions of Wagner on the opera stage also tell a story of a shift in emphasis from music to the visual. They remind us of how primitive stagecraft in Wagner's day was in terms of technology. Contemporary Wagner productions inspire the familiar speculation: what if Wagner had lived today, in the age of video, computer design, and engineering, with its extensive capacity to generate images and illusions? His lavish abuse of contraptions and special effects would have made the Met production, Cirque du Soleil, commercial films (*The Lord of the Rings*, *Toy Story*, *Avatar*, and *The Dark Knight*) seem modest. But the Achilles' heel in Wagner's notion of the "total work of art," a vision of the aesthetic dimension so influential after his death in art and architecture, was, in his own hands, the visual. He had no distinctive inspiration and judgment regarding the visual. His favorite painter was Hans Makart and his eye favored conventional and grandiose historicist taste, as his attire and the interiors of Wahnfried made plain.

On the other hand, no matter what one thinks of Wagner's literary achievements, at least they exhibited a self-conscious effort at originality and a distinctive and, in prose, a persuasive style. The essays, including the notorious one on the Jews in music, are usually brilliant in their arguments and rhetoric. In contrast, the 1876 Bayreuth *Ring*'s visuals, the scene painting, costumes, and effects have not stood the proverbial test of time. They struck many of his contemporaries, justifiably, as

pathetic and flimsy in a manner the music surely never did and still does not. Since of all the elements of the Wagnerian ideal of the music drama, the visual was the arena where Wagner was least innovative and prescient, subsequent generations have attempted to compensate. The very weakness of Wagner's visual imagination ought to give us pause with respect to the aspects of Wagner that are not, strictly speaking, about the music. His genius and the key to his stunning success was in making music far and away the most powerful transformative and seductive element of the experience of theater, if not of culture itself. The irony is that the audience going to a Wagner production today goes primarily to see and watch, not listen.

The widespread return to Wagner in our time also suggests the consequences of the dependency of culture on a managerial class and patrons that are averse to exploring less well represented parts of the immense and impressive opera repertory of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. With regard to music, those who wield power in our theaters are marginally interested in the occasional new work but skeptical about taking a new look at the history of the art form. Therefore, productions of all of Wagner's output for the stage—not only the *Ring*—have become the highlights of every major opera house since they appear to lend themselves to over-the-top spectacle. The one exception is *Rienzi*, whose complete musical text is enormous and for which there is still no entirely satisfactory performing version. Even the early works—*Das Liebesverbot* and to a lesser extent, *Die Feen*—have enjoyed revivals. Not even Bach, Mozart, or Beethoven have as much of their complete catalog of works in active use in the repertory. True, Wagnerian juvenilia (the C-Major Symphony), occasional works (the Centennial Overture), and other rarities (*Das Liebesmahl der Apostel*) remain in obscurity. The current ubiquity of complete staged versions of Wagner operas has diminished an earlier tradition, at its height during the mid-twentieth century, of concert performances of orchestral excerpts, although performances of operas in concert and massive orchestral pastiche versions of the *Ring* can still be found on symphony orchestra programs. It is appropriate to recall that the way Wagner spread his fame was through concert performances of major excerpts, therefore through the music, and secondarily, the text and its musical setting.

Among the remarkable facets of today's Wagner enthusiasm is the disappearance of the cloud that hung over Wagner's reputation in the decades immediately following 1945 as a result of his place in the construct of early twentieth-century German nationalism and his influence on modern anti-Semitism. That cloud was at its most threatening precisely during the era when the currency of musical modernism was high,

in the 1950s. Its aesthetic was mostly anti-Wagnerian. But bad memories fade rapidly. The damage that justifiably could be (and in some circumstances—Israel, for example—was) inflicted on Wagner's reputation derived as much from the composer's own attitudes, ideas, and behavior as from the excessive enthusiasm the Nazis (and before 1933, their ideological precursors) displayed for Wagner and the reciprocal adoration of the Nazis on the part of leading Wagnerians (including his descendants and their families). The immediate post-World War II reaction, not only in Germany, was to suppress the Nazi embrace of Wagner and whitewash Wagner's biography and the historical role of features in his life and work that made connecting Nazi ideology with Wagner and Wagnerism plausible.

Among these depoliticized post-World War II revisionist efforts was William Dieterle's film on Wagner's life, *Magic Fire*, filmed in Germany and released in 1955. The soundtrack was a deft pastiche created by Erich Wolfgang Korngold, who makes a cameo appearance (with a beard tacked on) as Hans Richter in the pit of Bayreuth, conducting the first complete *Ring* Cycle in 1876. Korngold was one distinguished Jewish émigré all too eager to forget what happened and be accepted back into post-1945 German-speaking Europe on any terms. He was particularly oblivious to the superficiality of denazification, and the deceit, lack of remorse, and oddly enough, the continued anti-Semitism visible in German-speaking Europe, notably in Korngold's native Austria.

The film takes on the aspect of a tourist travelogue, an entertaining advertisement for the normalcy and innocence of West Germany. Filmed "on location" in Europe, the film is dominated by charming landscapes, happy people, and snippets of new opera productions with great singers, including Leonie Rysanek, Otto Edelman, and Hans Hopf, accompanied by the Bavarian State Opera Orchestra and Korngold, in the pit and on the piano. But most shocking and egregious is that Wagner is not portrayed as an anti-Semite or even a rabid German nationalist. His cultural chauvinism is suppressed. Rather, he is depicted as a populist revolutionary devoted to social justice and artistic ideals. History becomes fantasy. *Die Meistersinger* is used excessively, even with a conveniently edited end to act 3. It serves as the soundtrack for Wagner's democratic allegiances, his relationship to Ludwig II, and even his love of Cosima. Given the intent of the film, the choice is apt since *Die Meistersinger's* argument is, at first glance, just about art and freedom, and its score brilliant and eloquent in its display of compositional virtuosity and allusions to the history of music.

The one biographical episode that survives reasonably intact is Wagner's sojourn in Switzerland and the period, when he forged a

relationship to Mathilde and Otto Wesendonck. It could be characterized as apolitical. Amidst the wholesale distortions of the past in the film, the depiction of Franz Liszt emerges unexpectedly as the most plausible, the liberties taken with his biography notwithstanding.

The shamelessness of the film's disregard of historical truth extends to a scene in which Meyerbeer is portrayed as an effete, superficial narcissist lounging in his bed eating breakfast—actually in a manner more fitting to Wagner—all amazingly suggestive of the way Jews were cast and depicted in Nazi-era films. Even Wagner's role in the betrayal of Hans von Bülow is sanitized, including the absence of any mention of Wagner's children.

The intent of the film was ostensibly to stress Wagner's greatness. In this regard, the film is memorable. The generous musical selections, their quality, and the persuasive acting of many of the characters all offer a reasonable approximation of how powerful and seductive Wagner's works were to his contemporaries, how philistine was the opposition to him, and how affecting, novel, and successful his music was in conveying a sense of meaning and overwhelming emotion. Wagner's appropriation and transformation of the musical rhetoric of classicism and early Romanticism, of ways of listening to music in relationship to time and memory—the transfiguration of music as narrative medium—come across well in the film.

The film makes a passing effort to redeem Wagner's ideas about the relationship between music and ideas, and therefore the power of his thoughts about the individual human condition. One hears a good deal about how his works illuminate suffering, renunciation, service, compassion, destiny, and the transcendence of mortality. The only reprehensible qualities one comes away with concerning Wagner the man are his notorious egotism, his taste for luxury, and his self-centered abuse of friends. But these become defined generically to fit the well-rehearsad image of the visionary temperamental artist as different from the rest of us, in whose case ethical aberrations are justified by the greatness of the artistic achievement.

The film reflects a view characteristic of the Cold War era in which it was made. The artist as a free individualistic spirit is turned into an object of praise. Great art transcends history and politics, justifying the belief that aesthetic matters are autonomous, separate from politics. Great art is ultimately universal. Wagner represents a high point of culture in the West, ironically a consequence of political freedom. The defense of that freedom was being shared by a new democratic West Germany, itself part of the bulwark against communism, the enemy of

freedom and individuality. Therefore, the memory of Wagner is limited to his genius as a composer.

One comes away from the film without a sense that Wagner's ideas and commitments, even about art, had a role in history beyond his defense of the right of principled self-expression or that he was himself an individual whose ambitions and impact reached well beyond the aesthetic. Rather than tackle the issue of how to reconcile Wagner's politics and influence in the culture of post-1870 Germany, or his impact on the character of nationalism and racialist thinking, with his achievement as a composer—the dilemma Thomas Mann struggled with—the film simply erases the facts, leaving us with just another self-centered artist.

Magic Fire was designed to make a case for the Wagnerian aesthetic when the outsized temporal scale, the lavish sonorities, the overheated alliterative texts, and the philosophical pretention all seemed dated. But the film's impact was limited and it passed into obscurity. Three decades after 1945—and two after the film's appearance—passed before a true Wagner renaissance could take hold. Pierre Boulez's debut in Bayreuth in the mid-1970s coincided with the capitulation of modernism and an anti-Wagnerian bias in musical taste. But it was a late twentieth-century technological innovation that actually made a Wagner revival possible: supertitles. Supertitles paved the way for the surprising and widespread renewal of interest in all opera at the end of the twentieth century. Before supertitles, the conventional opera audience (apart from that consistently loyal, self-replicating, and fanatical band of adherents that never vanished) found Wagner hard going. Without being able to follow the musical argument, sitting through the long stretches of narration, whether Wotan's in *Die Walküre* or Gurnemanz's in *Parsifal*, was hard to bear, as was the sheer length of the works. Standees at the Metropolitan Opera in the years before supertitles knew that they would find choice seats at Wagner performances after the first or second acts, as patrons fled, gladly handing over their ticket stubs to impecunious enthusiasts.

Indeed, supertitles rekindled the taste for Wagner by permitting the audience to follow word for word the carefully crafted interaction of music and text. The relentlessly overblown emotions and philosophical rhetoric in Wagner—perhaps for the first time, or at least once again—lent performances, for listeners, the plausible appearance of spiritual gravity and philosophical profundity not always apparent in opera. The one exception may be Bayreuth, the bastion of hard-core Wagner enthusiasm where the theater is small, the acoustic clarity exemplary, and the audience overwhelmingly German speaking. But beyond Bayreuth, with supertitles the essential existential questions of life, death, love, and

history appeared uniquely on display in a comprehensible manner that appealed to an audience eager to accept confirmation of their refined sensibilities. The very claims that Wagner made for himself—that he was redeeming musical art from the status of trivial or sentimental entertainment—seemed vindicated with ease through the foregrounding of the libretto and the mythic world it evoked. The sort of enthusiasm that evolved during Wagner's lifetime, rooted in the ideology and drama of the stage works—not the music—once again gained legitimacy. The Wagner of *Magic Fire* had been reduced to being just a composer, just a musician, albeit one of genius. The Wagner of the late twentieth century once again re-emerged as a writer, prophet, and philosopher.

Indeed, in the reception of Wagner today the music takes a subordinate place. The recent Wagner revival has had little impact on aspiring composers and musicians (take, for example, Nico Muhly) in a manner comparable to the effect *Tristan* had on Emmanuel Chabrier or *Parsifal* on Claude Debussy. Overwhelmed by the music, Chabrier, at age thirty-nine, resolved to abandon his livelihood and devote his life to musical composition. To be fair, however, although the operas of John Adams reveal little in the way of a debt to Wagner, observers have detected a Wagnerian influence in stage works of Philip Glass and in Messiaen's *Saint François d'Assise.*

The reasons that today's passion for Wagner is in the end, oddly enough, not the consequence of the allure of the music, are certainly not to be found in the quality of contemporary performances. The orchestral sound in modern performances, epitomized best by the playing of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, has never been as refined, precise, and elegant. The singing of artists such as René Pape, Jonas Kauffman, and Deborah Voigt (to name just a few) is superb. The astonishing library of recordings and DVDs, dating back to Solti's *Ring* and the Boulez–Chereau Bayreuth production, is still growing (including a distinctive recent *Lohengrin* conducted by Semyon Bychkov). These sound documents attest to an unrivalled standard of performance with regard to Wagner in opera houses today.

Nevertheless, serious reconsideration of what is assumed to be the proper Wagnerian style is long overdue and has yet to begin. Historical inquiry into performance traditions has had little impact on the way Wagner is played and sung. What we encounter now is unrelieved intensity, a lush orchestral texture, defined by rich brass and wind playing and a concomitantly charged string sound. This in turn has forced the already taxing vocal demands to the limit, leaving us, particularly in oversized opera houses, with unrelentingly shrill vocal power, most notably in female and tenor roles. The possibilities of the use of a

lighter, more transparent texture characteristic of the expressive range of mid-nineteenth-century vocal and instrumental musical practice have yet to be explored. Wagnerian performance might benefit from less bombast and more intimacy and grace—a stronger debt in terms of sonority to the music of Weber, Mendelssohn, and Meyerbeer. A hint of what is needed can be heard in a memorable live Metropolitan Opera broadcast of *Die Meistersinger* from 1959, conducted by Karl Böhm and with one of *Magic Fire's* stars, Otto Edelmann.

Although Wagner's influence in the history of music cannot be overestimated, it is no longer the astonishing harmonic language, the capacity to use music as a narrative medium, and the skill at constructing extensive and continuous musical space with the elaborate transformation of constituent motivic elements that fascinate. These aspects of the Wagnerian have become too commonplace. They reveal themselves in the use of music in the world of the commercial motion picture. Music in the Wagnerian sense, as a species of illustrative and narrative realism, from the "master" himself through to Korngold and Howard Shore and John Williams, has become ubiquitous, a familiar strategy by which the impact of the visual and the linguistic are augmented through music. Even the sonorities he pioneered have become banal. Wagner invented movie music before there were movies. Not only has the movie house displaced the opera house but the fastest growing aspect of opera seems to be its reinvention as a subspecies of cinema through HD broadcasts.

On account of the fact that the drama and the texts indeed drive today's enthusiasm for Wagner, audiences in turn call for arresting visual and dramaturgical treatments, often bizarre and arbitrary. This focus is paradoxical. Precisely when the political currency, literary style, and philosophical pertinence of what Wagner wrote may be at their weakest, most arcane, and irrelevant—if not dated—audiences appear mesmerized and engaged by attempts to redeem the dramaturgy through sets and various efforts to extract from the argument and the theatrical encounter with Wagner new meaning and significance for which the music functions as little more than a soundtrack.

The same paradox holds for the seemingly never-ending outpouring of writing about the meaning of Wagner, his world view, the construct of the erotic, the nature of narration, and, of course, Wagner's philosophy and politics. This observation applies to both journalism and scholarship. Music is no longer the primary subject, since what was once startling is now merely historical. But the nonmusical aspects of Wagner seem still germane and certainly inexhaustible as objects of clever and not so clever speculation. One exception is David Trippett's

highly original "Bayreuth in Miniature" (MQ 95, no. 1) that the editors of this journal are pleased to have published. By linking Wagner's vocal writing to traditions of the German theater and declamation, to the use of the voice in melodrama, and to Wagner's own manner of reading aloud in public, Trippett sheds useful new light on many passages in the major works that in turn suggest strategies by which we might better differentiate how we perform Wagner.

The secondary place music in Wagner has fallen to would not have surprised his contemporary critics, who feared, less in the case of Wagner himself than in those who were drawn to his work, a convenient exit from any requirement to become literate in music in order to appreciate the works. This was the view of both Brahms and Saint-Saëns. They thought that Wagner (whose craft they admired) ushered in the end of the primacy of musical culture and its subordination to the literary and visual. The irony was that it was Wagner's brilliant use of music that propelled that historical shift. Consider the case of Chabrier. Wagner's use of melody and harmony overwhelmed him, as did Wagner's potent manner of intersecting music with the linguistic and the dramatic—the musical characterization of events, ideas, and emotions. What was "Wagnerian" about Chabrier was not always evident on the surface, as in his opera *Gwendoline* (or in a more striking and original manner in Ernest Chausson's *Le Roi Arthus*). The influence on Chabrier transcended the imitative and shaped the character of musical thought, as evident in his masterpiece, the 1887 *Le Roi malgré lui*.

On the surface, that opera seems everything but Wagnerian. It is a farce, with dialogue, set numbers, and an affectionate connection to a specifically French theatrical tradition, from Meyerbeer to Offenbach and Bizet. But what sets it apart—both in terms of the power of the score and its capacity to transcend the charming and ephemeral characteristics of comic light opera—are its harmonic usage, its treatment of motivic elements, and its orchestration—all hallmarks of Wagner's legacy. These aspects are not on the surface, however, and they transcend style. Chabrier, like most composers, wrote for the broad public and colleagues and cognoscenti all at the same time; he sustained a surface of grace and lightness (not notable Wagnerian virtues) combined with accessibility. But the interior parallel complex musical argument he cultivated was deeply Wagnerian and directed at a discerning and highly literate audience capable of following complex musical arguments.

He eschewed the Wagnerian habit of wearing profundity on his proverbial sleeve, but he exploited the resources of dense progressive Wagnerian harmonic subtlety. The debt is found in hidden references and telling musical elaborations of text. Much of it is affectionate, such

as an eloquent but discreet evocation of *Die Meistersinger* at the end of act 2. But most of it is recognizable only by listeners with a sophisticated capacity to think in music. Consider a short passage in act 1, where Chabrier, moving from a long section in C major, travels to A major. Then in two bars, when the tenor Nangis expresses that he is confused and does not understand what he is being told, Chabrier writes a densely chromatic but elegant Wagnerian moment that modulates from A major to A-flat major in a flagrant Wagnerian manner that bewilders the ear and suspends a facile harmonic orientation, as if to underscore the sense of incomprehension articulated by Nangis in the text.

Such moments now usually go unnoticed. From a less probing standpoint, shared by most contemporary listeners who are neither amateurs nor wholly musically literate but familiar with the music through recordings, Wagner's music cannot seem unusual, striking, overwhelming, or demanding of further explanation. Only a small elite of listeners, scholars, and professionals are interested in or can follow Wagner's deft and inspired handling of musical time and form, or that of those who followed him, whether Chabrier or Richard Strauss. Even in scholarly writing about Wagner, the attraction remains everything about Wagner but the music. The continuing obsession today with Wagner concerns all that was subsumed by his appropriation of musical gestures: the use of music to illuminate (to borrow a visual metaphor) issues and sensibilities regarding identity, mortality, desire, history, justice, meaning, loss, nostalgia, grandiosity, monumentality, and dramatic tension and resolution.

The irony of this is that the Wagnerian obsessions, about sexuality, identity, and history, all seem hopelessly naïve and dated, if not laughable and ludicrous. The ideologies are more reminiscent of today's self-help literature, crude popular philosophy, and television evangelical preaching. A century and a half ago, beginning with Liszt's premiere of *Lohengrin* in 1850, Wagner's ideas, his concept of the theater and music, his musings on art and politics, and the encounter with the synthesis of music and myth—the musical dramatic theater of ideas and symbols—properly seemed more current, electrifying, and pertinent. Particularly with German-speaking audiences, Wagner was able to frame the terms of a modern national consciousness and the role of art with his own mélange of borrowed ideas. By filtering ideas through grandiose heroic myth, symbolism, and fantasy, Wagner displayed his gift and intuition for popularization. He grasped how the taste for a philosophy of history (e.g., Hegel and Marx) and the terms of German Idealism could become simplified and mesmerizing for the audience in the garb of myth. The spiritually minded musical amateur and hungry ticket holder during the

second half of the nineteenth century, not only in Germany, was given a "user friendly" access to a renewed fantasy of power, meaning, and purpose (however illusory), although marked by the apparent necessity to embrace loss, death, and sacrifice. All this was made easy and possible through music.

Wagner emancipated the ordinary literate middle-class listener as well as members of privileged ruling elites from the oppressive limits of the quotidian, the utilitarian demands of commerce, clock time, and the specter of an increasing mechanization of life and the spirit. Wagner's music, its seductive novelty and richness, its immediate comprehensibility, and Wagner's capacity to adapt the arcane and elaborate classical and early romantic rhetoric of musical discourse utterly transformed the experience of music. He used repetition and sonority the way painters use color, extending musical time sufficiently to sustain the attention of the listener to a scale comparable to that of the modern realist novel in which the narrator was hidden from view, much as the orchestra in Bayreuth would be in the context of a darkened stage. Wagner perfected the illusion of musical realism using myth as a medium of ideas. He drew his audience into a magical space that despite its patent fantastic character trumped the distressing and uncompromising facts of modern nineteenth-century politics, notably its demographic underpinnings, its urbanization, its patterns of migration, and their economic and political consequences.

Wagner's adaptations of the elaborate and powerful rhetorical and formal traditions of late eighteenth-century musical culture reached new audiences by bypassing the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century presumptions of musical literacy. The requirements for spectator comprehension were simplified. A wide audience could, through Wagner, appear to engage the highest aspirations of significance associated with music (e.g., the presumed profundity and authenticity associated with Beethoven) by circumventing the need, crucial in the case of Beethoven (as Schenker never tired of reminding his readers) to think musically. Accessibility trumped connoisseurship, as G. B. Shaw observed in *The Perfect Wagnerite*. Using music as medium by which language and illustration were enhanced as conveyors of meaning, a wide audience could bask in a new dimension of self-regard in terms of their adequacy to grasp profound, philosophical ideas. Even the intimate was rendered pretentiously philosophical through the use of myth and a patently artificial use of language.

Wagner's achievement in creating a musical discourse that paralleled, through the presumption of correspondence, linguistic realism would be appropriated by Strauss a generation later, but with an

anti-metaphysical vengeance. That vengeance was defined by a sense of irony and humor absent from Wagner, and a reading, by Strauss, of Nietzsche that, with a nearly Brahms-like pessimism, poked fun at the philosophical pretensions of Wagner. Strauss's compositional achievement is a synthesis of supposedly antagonistic trends in the mid-nineteenth century, between the neoclassicism of Brahms and the "new" progressive school of Liszt and Wagner, between the defenders of so-called absolute musical aesthetics and the proponents of program music. But when he dealt with the mythic, a Mozartean sense of the human, the ambiguous, the ironic, and the unspoken and unspeakable dominated, creating space for music. Even in *Salome* and *Elektra*, the overwrought bombast and declarative didacticism of Wagner is contested. Strauss, with deep respect, used Wagner against the Wagnerian.

All this is familiar and part of a dead past from the standpoint of contemporary music in the second decade of the twenty-first century. There is nothing startling, aggressive, novel, or unexpected in Wagner's music. Like much of the rest of the standard repertory, its accessibility through repeated performance and recording has stripped the experience of a great deal of its power, and courted, incredibly, banality. It has certainly rendered Wagner bereft of surprise. Even the scale of the sonority and grandiosity of the drama are tame (despite extravagant multimillion dollar high tech sets) when compared with modern cinema.

One gets the impression that Wagner as produced and heard today is an empty and tiresome spectacle entirely hollowed out of any residual ethical or political meaning. In the contemporary world, little if anything in Wagner's language and drama seems pertinent to the dilemmas of the public sphere, or the challenges faced by the individual. That cannot be said for what we hear and encounter on the stage in the cases of Mozart, Verdi, and Strauss, where irony, subtlety, and ambiguity and intimacy abound. Wagner's uncanny sense of what would overwhelm his contemporary audience, his flair for the theatrical and spectacular—his contemporaneity—was ultimately and paradoxically what has rendered him hopelessly dated. Ironically, the musical fabric and thought in Wagner may in the end be the only elements that still have the power to overwhelm, current fashion notwithstanding. Ludwig Wittgenstein hit the mark when he observed (poking fun at the Norns in *Götterdämmerung*): "Wagnerian drama too is not drama so much as an assemblage of situations strung together as though on a thread which, for its part, is merely *cleverly* spun and not inspired as the situations and motifs are."

The sharpest discontinuity apparent in confronting Wagner today is that, for better or worse, the political relevance is gone entirely.

Wagner's arguments about power, love, authority, and race struck a chord in an era when socialism and communism were radical alternatives, when the expansion of European colonialism fueled nationalist sentiment. In the wake of imperialism and the popularization of Darwin, Wagner lent racial theorizing a prestige that ran parallel with a novel political anti-Semitism. Wagner was compelling when *Also sprach Zarathustra* was a best-seller among the young, Oscar Wilde a cause célèbre, Otto Weininger and Freud's early writings on psychoanalysis shocking and disarming with respect to the understanding of sexuality and the human psyche. Wagner appealed to a bourgeois audience ambivalent about itself and still marginal.

But there is no political bite left to the apocalyptic pleading and the pathetic overheated sense of tragedy associated with sexuality or rebellion against the authority and routine materialism. The focus on sacrifice, ambivalence to sensuality, heroism, renunciation, and fated heroics—particularly the intermingling of love and death (in our age of online dating and ubiquitous divorce)—has become quaint, at best, and deeply disturbing in the aftermath of the Holocaust, in the wake of 9/11, in the face of random mass killings, and the rise of radical religious fanaticism.

Wagner has become the plaything of the very rich, and thankfully no longer the passion of populist reactionary political movements. The premises of libertarian free market apologists and the virtues of private enterprise may need to be contested (despite "occupy" movements and lame rhetoric about the 99 percent and the 1 percent) but not by Wagner's works. Socialism and communism are dead, and the resurgence of xenophobia and nationalism in Europe has nothing to do with Wagner. Wagner cannot be dramaturgically adapted to comment on the financial woes all over the world, social injustice, and the collapse of the Eurozone. The character of greed and commerce and the primacy of fame and wealth as the commanding values of the society actually find affirmation though Wagner.

So if we must perform Wagner, let us focus on the music. What merits attention and renewal is the astounding power and magic of Wagner's music. To make that speak, we would be well advised to experiment with performance practices, cultivate closer attention to diction and acting, and expand the range and character of vocal and instrumental sonorities. We should emulate the ascetic and symbolic nonrealistic versions pioneered by Wieland Wagner that were in the tradition of Adolphe Appia and Alfred Roller. Although Wieland Wagner may have been motivated by a desire to distance Wagner (and himself) from the performance traditions and ideological connections to the

Third Reich, in today's context, the Appia–Roller–Wieland Wagner approach would be welcome for no other reason than that it encourages a more single-minded emphasis on the musical experience. Refined and visually imaginative productions that do not traffic in forms of realism and crude ideological didacticism are easily contextualized for the audience in a manner that does not involve any sort of attempt to hide Wagner's politics or his deleterious historical political legacy. With elegant and simple streamlined visuals, refined acting, the music and its detailed interaction with text and meaning can provide us with an experience of Wagner that inspires us to think about what we hear and not what we see, to contemplate and remember music, and not be distracted by what is said, what goes on, and how we interpret the drama.

Last but not least, if only we could give Wagner a well-earned rest. That would be a relief and make room, not only for more new operas, but the Wagnerian legacy, the dozens and dozens of great post-Wagnerian operas from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that are languishing on the shelves and merit revival with new productions that make proper use of novel techniques in stagecraft and theater. That would be the most fitting tribute to Wagner, prophet of the music of the future, on his two hundredth birthday.

The Lavender Cowboy and "The She Buckaroo": Gene Autry, Patsy Montana, and Depression-Era Gender Roles

Stephanie Vander Wel

Gene Autry, the preeminent singing cowboy of the 1930s, and his famous contemporary, the singing cowgirl Patsy Montana, swept the airwaves with romantic representations of frontier culture just as radio began to transmit the myths of the West to Middle America and a national audience. WLS's *National Barn Dance*, the most prominent radio program to broadcast rural music in the 1930s, launched Autry's career as a singing cowboy who performed sentimental mountain tunes and cowboy songs while figuratively roaming the western prairies. In addition to Montana, the show jump-started a number of prominent singing cowgirls, the Girls of the Golden West (a sister duet) and Louise Massey and the Westerners (also a family ensemble).[1] Alongside Autry, though, it was Montana who often appeared as a solo singing cowgirl in her role as the lead singer of a string band ensemble, the Prairie Ramblers. In performances and promotional material, Montana emerged as a self-determined western heroine whose pursuits of social and material autonomy were comparable to those of the cowboy hero. While Autry crooned his cowboy melodies first on radio, then in film, Montana would establish her musical identity on radio and on record with her signature tune, "I Want to Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart," the first song written and recorded by a female country artist to sell a million copies.

Through the powerful mediums of modern technology, the musical expressions of Montana and Autry met the economic and social conditions, above all the gendered tensions, of the Great Depression. The collapse of the economic foundation of industrial and agricultural America had stripped men of their livelihoods (25 percent nationwide), thereby making it nearly impossible for them to assert their patriarchal status as

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breadwinners.[2] Having first prompted a "crisis in masculinity," the Great Depression eventually catalyzed a period of "gender strife and change."[3] While production industries (construction, manufacturing, mining, to name a few) closed their doors, a growing number of married and single women entered the public sphere to secure positions in the increasingly feminized service industries.[4] Within the historical context of unemployed men and working women, and significantly informed by it, Autry and Montana contributed to the shaping of a musical West that responded to the cultural contestations of gender. Autry sang about lone cowboys yearning for the promises of the American West, and Montana presented musical landscapes where cowgirl heroines were confident and free to roam.

Scholars have recognized the general significance of the singing cowboy in country music and popular culture, but few writers have acknowledged the importance of the singing cowgirl.[5] The singing cowboy, it has been shown, provided a new and marketable image for the country music industry, one different from the comedic, backward rube that dominated the genre.[6] At a time when Depression-era listeners craved a romantic image of rurality, the singing cowboy could become, in the words of Bill Malone, "a reassuring symbol of independence and mastery, a collection of traits that the nation had once possessed and might once again assert."[7] In fact, the singing cowboy, according to Peter Stanfield, may have been the "most important cultural figure to emerge from the tumultuous years of the Great Depression—a character that represented the fantasies, desires, and ambitions of those who felt keenly the economic hardship and threat (and fact) of dispossession and dislocation."[8] The singing cowboy and, I argue, the singing cowgirl as well offered hope and promise to those suffering the devastating effects of rural poverty, urban unemployment, and migration. In managing the doubts and fears of such realities, they also participated in the construction of a new western musical mythos of gender.

The gendered relationship between western music and the Depression emerged in the expressive musical discourse produced by both Montana and Autry during radio's investment in promoting romantic settings of the frontier. In radio, Autry first cultivated his well-known identity: the gallant yet emotive cowboy, who could freely give voice to his interior sentiments in both nostalgic tunes and western numbers. Of greatest interest to me are the ways Autry constructed this persona within a musical context of sentimental masculinity that also could embrace the singing cowgirl, specifically Montana's visions of self-determination. Autry did not promote an uninflected and rugged individualism impervious to the era's social and economic attacks on masculine

cultural authority. Instead, he embodied the gendered tensions of the Depression by infusing the heroic stance of the cowboy with effusive expressions. Montana, on the other hand, performed music that suggested a longing for a form of independence removed from the confines of domesticity at the same moment that women were increasingly visible in the public sphere. Introducing her songs about self-directed cowgirls to the radio audience of Chicago's WLS, Montana's narratives did not fully abandon gender norms. Rather, her accounts of cowgirls freely roaming the open range often gestured toward traditional heterosexual romance and courtship. Thus, I suggest that the cultural importance of Montana's and Autry's music lay specifically in the ways those singers articulated and assuaged the era's concerns about gender by carefully combining gender norms with musical imagery that simultaneously called those models into question.

What made Autry's and Montana's narratives so compelling to a broad midwestern audience were their artful inclusion of gendered imagery within the musical myths of the West. But because most scholarship has focused almost exclusively on the lyrical content of cowboy songs, music's place in shaping the cultural meaning of the singing cowboy or the singing cowgirl has been underappreciated.[9] As they were reiterating powerful and effective textual conventions in their songs, Montana and Autry were drawing upon the prevalent musical codes and practices of cowboy music to enrich and define their gendered portrayals of the western landscape. Each western star combined the apparent verisimilitude of folk music with the musical idioms of Tin Pan Alley to help authenticate their mass-mediated personas: they linked their strophic ballads to the supposed oral culture of cowboy life on the open range (as exemplified in John Lomax's 1910 collection, *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads*) and relied upon the tropes of popular music in creating their glamorized pictures of the West.

To his midwestern listeners struggling to hold on to their farms or find employment in urban areas, Autry's early cowboy tunes told sympathetically morose tales of the cowboy's vulnerability to the dangers and hardships of the open range. Yet his Tin Pan Alley cowboy songs provided lush soundscapes that framed the intimate sounds of his vocal delivery over the airwaves of radio. Crooning to his audience, the singing cowboy soothed the concerns of the era as he presented a principled version of masculinity that took the risk of being perceived as effeminate. Montana, on the other hand, performed folk-like ballads and stylized songs that underscored the self-reliance and vitality of the cowgirl without relinquishing the ideals of femininity. She belted out her lyrics and often yodeled to the top of her range in, for example, "I

Want to Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart," songs that combined the stylistic features of popular music with vernacular idioms. By refashioning the West into a place where standard models of gender could include emoting cowboys and autonomous cowgirls, Montana and Autry broadened the spectrum of gender for Depression-era audiences.

WLS and Its Depression-Era Audience

The recording industry, like many industries affected by the economic crisis of the Depression, almost came to a standstill during the 1930s. In its place, radio disseminated music to the segment of the American populace that had access to this technology. Listeners could tune their radios to their favorite programs and listen to music without the expense of buying records. It was at this time that Autry and Montana appeared on WLS, one of the most predominant radio stations of the era, and one that included country music in its broadcasts to a wide audience outside of the South.[10] With its clear-channel signal and fifty-thousand-watt transmitter (acquired in 1931), WLS's programs of country and popular musics reached listeners throughout most of the central part of the country. To complement the medium of radio, the station distributed an annual publication, *WLS Family Album* (beginning in 1929), and later a monthly magazine, *Stand By!*, that provided listeners with photographs of its performers and promotional material of its broadcasts. The program *Smile-A-While*, on which Patsy Montana often performed "I Want to Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart," was a daily early morning show advertised to "farm families and other early risers who enjoy lively popular and old-time music to start the day off right."[11] Saturday afternoons featured the show *Merry-Go-Round*, which transmitted the "whirl of fun and merry music. . . . Harmony teams, male quartets, banjo selections, piano novelties, 'blues' numbers, and other features help to make this fast-moving show."[12]

But the program that cemented WLS's high standing in radio was the *National Barn Dance*, first broadcast in 1924. The NBC Blue network, beginning in 1933, transmitted a one-hour segment of the *National Barn Dance* (sponsored by Miles Laboratories and Alka-Seltzer) on radio stations throughout the United States. Through the magic of radio technology, the Saturday night barn dance signaled an evening of rural entertainment that cast an eclectic mix of popular and country musics into a variety show format, reminiscent of the traditions of minstrelsy and vaudeville.[13] The broadcasts juxtaposed the raucous music making of the Hoosier Hot Shots' jazz playing to the Cumberland Ridge Runners southeastern string band music and the Prairie Ramblers'

western swing numbers. Its comedic skits included a master of ceremonies, originally George D. Hay (who later established the *Grand Ole Opry*), bantering with characters dressed in blackface and rural garb. The program also reached into the domestic sphere with intimate forms of vocal music: Grace Wilson's popular songs from her former vaudeville days, Bradley Kincaid's ballads from southern Appalachia, the Maple City Four's barbershop arrangements, and Gene Autry's sentimental mountain tunes and cowboy songs.[14]

With this diverse mix of solo artists and ensembles, WLS captured the musical sensibilities of its heterogeneous local and regional audience. Originally owned by Sears, Roebuck, and Co. and later by Burridge D. Butler (the proprietor of the newspaper *Prairie Farmer*), WLS catered to the midwestern farmer or the Chicagoan who had recently left the family farm by publicizing musical acts as having originated in the midwestern region, either the city or the countryside. For instance, Sally Foster, a "Native of Wisconsin," sang "sweet old-fashioned songs"; Carol Hammond was marketed as "A Chicago girl with a grand voice"; and the Three Neighbor Boys, "directly from the farm in Marshall county Illinois," performed in a manner that "never lost its sweetness and simplicity."[15] WLS also tailored its programming to particular communities of European immigrants and southern migrants in the Midwest. Leaving their homes in the German-speaking regions of Europe, emigrants had established family farms in the Midwest over the course of the nineteenth century and later joined other immigrant communities, namely those of Poles and Czechs, to work in the emerging industries of Chicago.[16] With the developments of the radio industry in the Windy City, specific ethnic groups found radio to be a viable way to remain connected with their native culture.[17] One can imagine how those of German-Swiss ethnicity must have tuned their radios to WLS's programs to hear the yodel songs of the Dezurik sisters or Christine "Our Little Swiss Yodeler" or the performances of Sophie Germanich, "The Prairie Farmer Girl."[18]

At the same time, WLS's programming of southern rural music—especially Bradley Kincaid's mountain songs (1926–30) and later the Cumberland Ridge Runners' string band music (1930–37)—reached a growing audience of southern migrants in the Midwest. Since World War I, black and white southerners had been leaving the depressed conditions of the South for the economic promise of manufacturing cities such as Chicago, Detroit, and Cincinnati.[19] By 1930, close to three million white southerners (mostly from the Upland South) had settled in the Midwest.[20] In fact, the contemporary sociologist Vivien M. Palmer noticed a "distinct colony" of Tennesseans in the North

Center of Chicago in 1930 that had joined the various ethnic communities of the city.[21]

With an established local and regional audience, WLS was successful in attracting listeners throughout the country as well. According to WLS promotional materials, "More letters of applause from listeners are received weekly as a result of the barn dance than from any other single WLS program. From Maine to California and from Canada to Mexico, tens of thousands of families find in this feature something 'different.'"[22] Especially during the Depression, WLS's *National Barn Dance* became the dominant barn dance show on radio until the *Grand Ole Opry* (founded in 1926) gained network status in 1939.[23] What contributed to its success were the ways in which WLS and the *National Barn Dance* had comforted its listeners during the social and material upheavals of the decade. The station rarely mentioned the devastating effects of the Depression to its midwestern audience, unlike the emerging narratives in blues coming out of Chicago. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, Big Bill Broonzy's "Starvation Blues," Tampa Red's "Depressions Blues," and Sonny Boy Williamson's "Welfare Store," for example, articulated the angst and the grim reality of the city's black community fighting to survive the aftermath of the Depression. The genre, according to blues scholar William Barlow, provided a sharp contrast to "the full-scale retreat into fantasy that characterized much of the major networks' radio programming during the depression years."[24]

Devoted to a "full-scale retreat into fantasy," WLS framed its eclectic mix of music nostalgically, as belonging to a bygone era. Even the more urbane popular pieces, such as the Hoosier Hot Shots' jazz numbers or the popular songs of Grace Wilson, were folded into a rural setting that included old-time music.[25] Contributing to this impression, *WLS Family Album* stated that its artists were "home folks, striving to do their best to lighten your cares by bringing you wholesome fun and entertainment. They hope that you will enjoy their show from the ringing of the first cowbell until 'Home Sweet Home.'"[26] The performers of the *National Barn Dance*, in essence, belonged to an idyllic past of simpler times for those who were shaken by the chaotic conditions of the present.[27]

In the Midwest alone, the economic catastrophe deeply affected the region's well-developed agricultural and manufacturing industries. With the price of crops falling to a new low, "only 16 percent of farm households earned incomes above the national median of fifteen hundred dollars per year in the mid-1930s."[28] Under these dire conditions, farmers struggled to maintain their livelihoods in the midst of bank foreclosures that were snatching away family farms to be sold at

auction.[29] The collapse of the manufacturing industries in midwestern cities could be just as devastating. In Chicago, the steel industry in particular shut down production entirely and turned away its working-class labor force, pushing the unemployment rate in the city up to a staggering 50 percent in the early years of the Depression.[30]

According to Lizabeth Cohen's study of the unemployment crisis in 1930s Chicago, specific demographics of the working class were the most vulnerable—African Americans, Mexicans, and middle-aged men.[31] Of the 50 percent who were out of work in Chicago, 16 percent were African Americans, a disproportionately high rate considering that they made up only 4 percent of the city's population.[32] Mexican factory workers also faced massive unemployment, causing half of the Mexican population to leave the city during the Depression.[33] Because of these circumstances, many black as well as white southern migrants who had found jobs in midwestern cities during the early decades of the twentieth century returned to the South for the first half of the decade, surviving on small plots of land.[34] Others, realizing that the economic standing of the South was likely worse, remained in the Midwest in the face of the grave possibilities for employment.[35]

Middle-aged men, often with families, also bore the brunt of this dramatic downturn in industrial production and commerce. With so many young people (sons and daughters of unemployed fathers) scrambling for work, employers of Chicago's manufacturing industry tended to hire men under the age of thirty-five.[36] Consequently, women, attempting to make up for the loss of family income, secured low-paying service positions (namely as clerks, waitresses, or maids) that had survived the economic conditions of the Depression.[37] In fact, a 1934 government study of workers on relief shows that men were usually out of work longer than women in many urban areas, including Chicago.[38]

Women, emerging as significant contributors to their family's income, assumed or at least shared the breadwinning role usually reserved for men. Though they typically did not compete with men over manufacturing jobs, their increased presence in the workforce created much controversy. Several polls conducted during the period reveal a growing hostility toward employed women, who were seen as the cause of male unemployment, despite the material reality that required women to work in the public sphere.[39] Even federal policies aimed at alleviating the grim state of the economy supported unemployed men and discouraged married women from seeking employment outside of the home.[40] The Depression thus was a contradictory era in which the economic collapse challenged the patriarchal ordering of the family while large parts

of society wished to re-establish men in the market economy and women in their homes without the pressures of earning an income.[41]

In the mist of these heated debates about men's and women's societal positions in the public and private spheres, WLS invoked the idyllic past and provided stable familial imagery. For the 1930 edition of *WLS Family Album*, the cover featured the caption "The Happy Radio Family" with an illustration of a family sitting around the radio in their living room: the father reading the newspaper (still dressed in his business attire), the mother doing needlework, the daughter pretending to feed her doll, and the son playing with a model airplane.[42] The image, chock-full of normative gender roles, gave the impression of how radio was responsible for this cozy family scene by drawing all its members together to listen to their favorite programs.

WLS's portraits of standard gender roles were not limited to the illustrations of its publication, but also appeared in its broadcasts, in which proud, stalwart singing mountaineers and sentimental southern mothers managed the uncertainties of its listeners. As historian Kristine McCusker has argued, WLS presented "the soothing sounds of lullabies sung softly and sweetly by pioneer fathers and virtuous mothers," thereby forging a connection between normative concepts of gender and the sentimentality of old-time music.[43] Just as the economic conditions of the 1930s attacked the social standing of men, the singing mountaineer Bradley Kincaid (who first appeared on WLS in 1926) strove particularly to preserve conventional models of masculinity and femininity. In his radio scripts, Bradley portrayed the courageous feats of pioneering men taming the wilderness of southern Appalachia into a region of morality in which southern mothers devoted themselves to the care of their families.

The singing mountaineer, however, was not alone in the southern region of the United States for WLS's audiences. Various comedic hayseeds joined the WLS cast, namely Arkie the Arkansas Woodchopper, "a farm boy from the Ozarks," and Pat Buttram, who embodied the "backwoods humor of the Old South" with his pronounced nasal speaking voice that constantly broke to his head voice.[44] WLS publicity explained that Buttram "really did come from Winston County, Alabama, and he really does talk most of the time the same way as he does on the stage or on the radio. He was just born with a comical streak."[45] The centrality of the hillbilly figure magnified commercial country music's reliance upon the performance conventions of minstrelsy.[46] Like other country radio shows of the era, WLS's *National Barn Dance* brought together rural burlesques of race and class by promoting comedic skits of the hillbilly and the blackface figure located in the

imagery of the "Old South." Clifford Soubier, originally from a theatrical family of Ontario, Canada, played the role of "Old Pappy," the impersonation of an aging black man who told "animal stories" to children; and Malcolm Clair enacted the character "Spareribs," with his "natural-sounding" southern dialect.[47] With the hillbilly image lying in proximity to the parodies of southern blackness, the illustrations of the mountaineer were meant to invoke an Anglo-Saxon lineage of pioneers separated from any cultural connection to African Americans.

The dialectical struggle between competing images of country music—the noble mountaineer and the comedic rube—unfolded in the late 1920s and early 1930s against a backdrop of heightened attention toward the "Benighted South." For instance, the journalistic focus on the infamous "Monkey Trial" of John Scopes—a Tennessee science teacher tried in court for teaching evolution—helped to circulate H. L. Mencken's vitriolic diatribes against the backwardness of the South throughout the country.[48] These particularly derisive views occurred when numerous national reports made public the widespread poverty in the Upland South and the Cotton Belt. With the closing of the coalmining and timber industries, the rural and working class had few choices but to turn to subsistence farming.[49] In 1934, 75 percent of southern Appalachians were attempting to survive on less than fifty acres.[50] Similarly, the Deep South's economic reliance on cotton, at a time when the price of the crop was plummeting, pushed more farmers off their land into the exploitative system of tenancy or sharecropping. By 1930, 60 percent of southern farmers did not own their own land, and by 1937, two-thirds of the nation's tenant farmers and sharecroppers lived in the South, of which the majority (two-thirds) was white (since many African Americans had migrated to northern and midwestern cities during the early part of the twentieth century).[51] The popular media (*Life* and *Fortune* magazines, for example) documented the conditions of tenancy with illustrations of the depraved living conditions of the white rural poor—photographs that captured the hunched-over laboring bodies of men and the sullen, worried expressions of women.

These particular images of the South coincided with another significant factor that contributed to the perception of southern impoverishment: the Depression-era migration from the Southwest to California, commonly referred to as the Okie migration. The economic hardships of the Depression and the natural disasters caused by drought that scorched the land from Texas up to South Dakota forced tenant farmers of the southwestern region to look for work elsewhere.[52] More than half of the migratory population settled in the rural region of central California, where white families picked cotton and other crops while

living in labor camps or other forms of makeshift housing. By the late 1930s, California residents, resenting the influx of white migrants, viewed the displaced as pejoratively as they did those associated with immigrant farm labor and with poor rural southerners in general. The state legislature even passed antimigrant policies to keep the Okies from entering the Golden State.

The depictions of the backward hillbilly in the many accounts of white rural southern poverty made it close to impossible for the singing mountaineer to maintain his determined individualism in a region known for its social and material deprivations.[53] The dominant images of southern rurality, as Richard Peterson has noted, "alternated between the sullen, displaced farmer and the comedic buffoon."[54] Given this historical context, the country music industry distanced itself from agrarian imagery associated with southern Appalachia.[55] Thus, when Autry appeared on WLS, the station deliberately shaped Autry's performance persona into that of cowboy rather than trying to market yet another singing mountaineer linked to the South.

Gene Autry and WLS

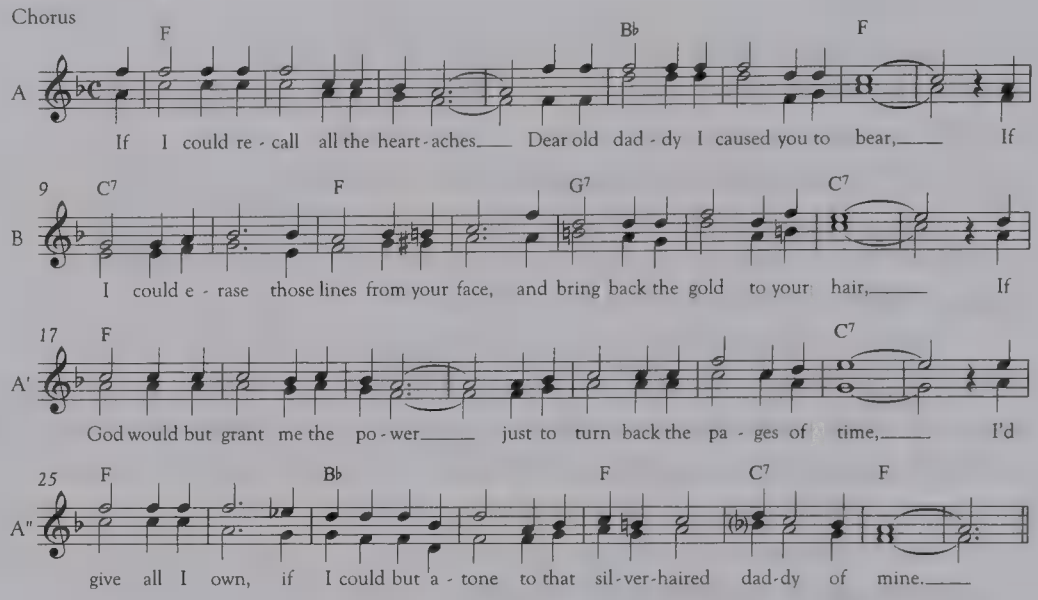
Autry's cowboy identity relied on the myths of the West to reassert the cultural authority of masculinity and rescue the white rural and working class from the stereotypical perceptions of the Depression-era South. Yet Autry's musical repertory did not necessarily support these ideals. As a recording artist of the blues and sentimental songs, his performances often voiced the vulnerabilities of masculinity during the early years of the Depression. Beginning his career in New York City, Autry recorded covers of Jimmie Rodgers's "Blue Yodels" and elegiac pieces for a host of budget labels as well as the more prominent labels, Victor Records and the American Record Company (ARC). Autry also recorded the blues-inflected music written by his peers, Frankie Marvin's "Bear Cat Papa Blues" (1931) and several of his own, "Do Right Daddy Blues" (1931), "Birmingham Daddy" (1931), and "Jailhouse Blues" (1931).[56] Featuring many of the themes central to the genre—rambling, sexual boasting, spending time in jail, conflicts with sexual and romantic partners, heartache, and loneliness—Autry's songs often relied on sexual language to promote a sense of bravado. Autry's "Do Right Daddy Blues," for example, draws from the musical conventions of the blues (a minor pentatonic melody supported by a chord progression of root movement of fifths, I–IV–bVII–bIII) to describe the sexual appetite and the rambling ways of the male protagonist:

I just come down from across the Sioux
I'm a true loving daddy say will I do
I'm a do right daddy and I don't deny my name.

Now you can feel on my legs and you can feel on my thigh
but if you feel my legs you've got to ride me high
I'm a do right daddy but I can't be treated this way.[57]

Like his peers in country music, Cliff Carlisle's "Tom Cat Blues" (1932) or Jimmie Davis's "Sewing Machine Blues" (1932), Autry's appropriation of the sexual frankness of the genre presents a swaggering racialized masculinity.[58] By the end of the song, however, Autry wails desperately in his higher range as he considers drowning himself in the river over rejection by a sexual partner, "My little baby has done and turned me down." Such a display of machismo dissolving into heartache and desperation suggests that the protagonist's confident strut was simply a thinly veiled guise meant to conceal his fragility.[59]

In addition to the use of sexual metaphors to depict the underlying tensions of masculinity, Autry continued to emphasize the vulnerability of male subjects in songs that expressed a longing for the pastoral. As in the country music of his contemporaries (Carter Family's "My Dixie Darling," for example), Autry's repertory maintained the traditions of the singing mountaineer performing minstrel and sentimental songs to illustrate an idealized South. In fact, his first hit song "That Silver-Haired Daddy of Mine," co-written by Jimmy Long, was a lament that extended the conventions of antebellum minstrel songs found in Stephen Foster's "Old Folks at Home" (1851) and "My Old Kentucky Home" (1853). Autry's setting of a protagonist mourning over an aging bereft father, who lives in a "vine-covered shack in the mountains," links a male protagonist to the musical tropes of nostalgia—pentatonic melodies supported by simple harmonic progressions (ex. 1). Yet Autry's rustic narrative was not simply tied to the rhetoric of folk music. His most bucolic songs often combined folk-like idioms with the stylized language of popular music—a common practice that can be heard in previous portrayals of the South; for example, James Bland's "Carry Me Back to Old Virginia" (1875).[60] With a more varied melodic language supported by secondary dominants, the chorus's bridge in "That Silver-Haired Daddy of Mine" magnifies the subject's expressed desires to atone for past mistakes that have aged his forsaken father: "If I could erase those lines from your face and bring back the gold to your hair." Thus, Autry's initial commercial success as a recording star lay with a sentimental song that fused the musical codes of the folk with those of


Chorus
A
F
B♭
F
If I could re - call all the heart - aches Dear old dad - dy I caused you to bear, If
9
B
C7
F
G7
C7
I could e - rase those lines from your face, and bring back the gold to your hair, If
17
A'
F
C7
God would but grant me the po - wer just to turn back the pa - ges of time, I'd
25
A"
F
B♭
F
C7
F
give all I own, if I could but a - tone to that sil - ver - haired dad - dy of mine.

Example 1. "That Silver-Haired Daddy of Mine," words and music by Gene Autry and Jimmy Long. Recorded by Gene Autry and Jimmy Long with Frankie Marvin on violin and Roy Smeck on steel guitar, 1931. Copyright © 1932 (Renewed). The Gene Autry Music Company and Universal Music Corp. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

popular music to express the depth and pathos of masculine yearning for a past far removed from the grim realities of the present.

In acknowledging the fragility of 1930s rural culture and masculinity, Autry's music must have resonated with WLS listeners. Midwestern farmers were attempting to hold on to their family farms, while many southern migrants yearned for a South unmarked by a depressed economy, draught, and poverty. Indeed, Autry's maudlin songs led to his career in radio. "That Silver-Haired Daddy of Mine" initially attracted the attention of Art Satherley of ARC. Realizing the potential in Autry's recordings, Satherley persuaded Autry to record exclusively for ARC by promising the country musician a spot on one of the most successful radio stations, WLS.[61] Though Autry continued to record blues songs for ARC, "That Silver-Haired Daddy of Mine" appeared more appropriate to WLS's programming of nostalgia. As the 1930s continued, Autry distanced himself from his blues repertory (and advised others to do the same). In a 1933 publication, *The Art of Writing Songs and How to Play a Guitar*, Autry said, "The racy risqué song just doesn't last. Regardless of what kind of a song you write, keep it clean and wholesome. . . . Nine out of ten requests that I receive both on radio and on the stage are for the simple wholesome type of song."[62] Rather than catering to the demands of the recording industry, Autry turned his

attention to the dictates of the radio industry, including those of radio sponsors who wanted appropriate music for selling their wares to an audience mostly composed of women.[63]

"That Silver-Haired Daddy of Mine," invoking a bucolic southern mountain culture, certainly adhered to the musical requirements of the radio industry. Despite the sentiments expressed in Autry's song, WLS did not indicate that Autry was a performer of mountain ballads but rather a singer of the open prairie. "A cowboy sitting in the saddle just watching the herd at night frequently would sing one of those long-drawn-out songs as a means of keeping the cattle reassured and quiet." Within this western setting, "one song written by Gene Autry stands out as a favorite. 'That Silver-Haired Daddy of Mine' seems to have universal appeal, and no program with Gene Autry is quite complete until he sings it."[64] Even though Autry's hit wasn't necessarily a song meant to lull the cattle into quiet repose on the open range, WLS promoted Autry as a western figure from the very beginning of his radio career.

With his sentimental songs mapped onto the topography of the West, Autry infused his cowboy persona of independence with tender idioms, thereby bringing together a heroic representation of masculinity with perceivably "feminine" modes of expression. That is, his music appeared to encapsulate the shifting definitions of masculinity during the 1930s. Autry's initial radio performances, for example, were on a WLS program called *Tower Topics Time* that appeared to be part of an emerging strategy of treating men as viable consumers. Since men's gender status was no longer clearly linked to notions of work and "manly production," capitalist structures of the 1930s began to align men with "feminized" consumerism.[65] *Tower Topics Time*, an early morning radio show, was initially designed in 1925 to accommodate the interests of women.[66] But by the time of Autry's radio debut, the broadcast had extended its programming to market the household products of its sponsor Sears, Roebuck to men while maintaining its appeal to women. The hosts of the show, Ann Williams and Sue Roberts, specialized in "women's styles" and "home decoration" while addressing various topics—"recipes, child welfare, neighborly news, decorating shop and Junior Time."[67] In addition to catering to female listeners, Williams and Roberts also claimed "the distinction of having the only household program for men on the air in the Middle West."[68] Thus, Autry first appeared as a singing cowboy on a program that linked men not only to consumerism but also to domesticity.

Williams, who usually introduced Autry to radio listeners, was instrumental in shaping Autry's cowboy persona to male consumers and women in the audience. According to Autry (years later in 1950), Williams would announce his radio performances with "bright talk of

the wind-swept plains, of coyote howls in the moonlight, and cowboys on galloping horses."[69] But Williams's preambles did more than establish a western backdrop for Autry's performances. She also stressed the cowboy's alluring qualities, molding Autry into a desirable commodity for his women fans. On the last page of Autry's 1933 songbook, *Gene Autry's Sensational Collection of Famous Original Cowboy Songs and Mountain Ballads* (which Williams assisted in publishing and promoting), Williams described Autry (see fig. 1):

> A tall, slender chap, guitar slung over his shoulder, standing close to the microphone yodeling a song of the range. A gray sombrero tipped slightly back, almost, but not quite, hiding his blond hair. A gaily-colored scarf, knotted loosely around his neck, emphasizing the permanent suntan. . . . Blue eyes—bright, and oh, so friendly, and a smile that takes in the whole world!

Figure 1. The Front cover of *Gene Autry's Sensational Collection of Famous Original Cowboy Songs and Mountain Ballads.*

Williams's depiction of the physical attractiveness of the singing cowboy gestured to the exoticism of the Spanish or Latino cowboy with Autry's "blond hair" appearing under his "gray sombrero." The publicity for his songbook further promoted Autry's desirability in relation to his emotive idioms and the romance of cowboy culture, "If it's adventure you want—Gene Autry brings you a rollicking song of the round-up. But if you want a dreamy, soothing tune just turn to one of Gene's lilting ballads—and dream on."[70] In essence, Autry's early publicity attempted to mediate his tender emotionalism with a standard model of masculinity (fig. 2).

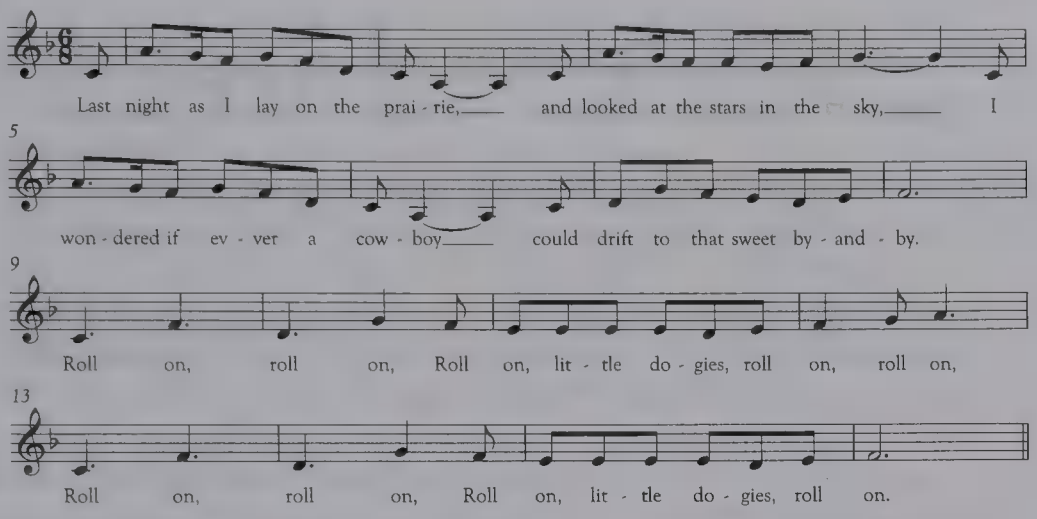
Though Autry appeared to alternate easily between "rollicking songs" of the round-up and "lilting ballads" of the heart, his early recordings of cowboy songs tended to emphasize the latter by continuing the maudlin expressions that characterized "That Silver-Haired Daddy of Mine." In his first recording session devoted primarily to cowboy songs, in 1933, Autry recorded "Cowboy's Heaven" (written and previously recorded by Frankie Marvin), "The Little Ranch House on Old

Figure 2. Photograph of Gene Autry in *Gene Autry's Sensational Collection of Famous Original Cowboy Songs.*

Circle B" (written by Volney Blanchard), and "The Yellow Rose of Texas," a nineteenth-century minstrel song that had transformed into a cowboy number. Changing the lyrics from "no other darky [*sic*] knows her, no darky only me" to "no cowboy knows her, no cowboy only me," Autry pines for his home in Texas where his beloved awaits. As Stanfield demonstrates, cowboy tunes were often reworked minstrel laments of loss, love, and death that pointed to an idyllic South.[71] For example, the well-known cowboy ballad "When the Work's All Done This Fall" is about a cowpuncher who longs for his family home in "Dixie," before he dies tragically in a cattle stampede.

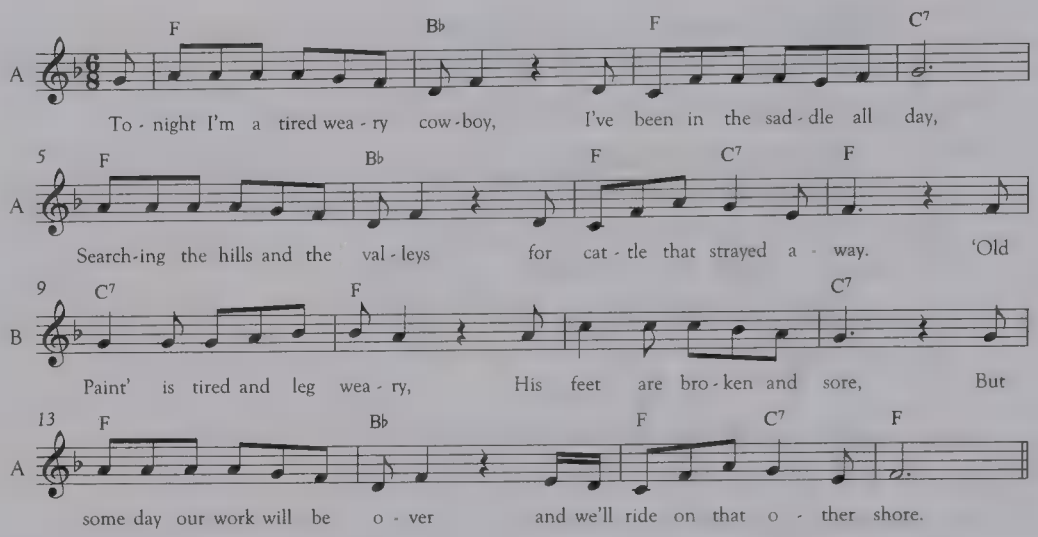
Autry's recordings of newly composed cowboy ballads also continued the performance traditions of elegiac themes of death and salvation, thereby placing the cowboy figure in sentimental settings instead of the rugged West. "Cowboy's Heaven," for example, presents a tired weary cowboy whose only refuge from his tedious life on the open range is through reaching the "promised land." During his long and laborious days of chasing after stray cattle, the cowboy anticipates that he will someday "ride on that other shore" to join "the souls of cowpunchers" in an afterlife that pledges relief for the discontented, a common nineteenth-century notion.[72]

Influenced by the musical traditions of piety and folk culture, "Cowboy's Heaven" incorporates a common melody and general narrative shared by the cowboy ballads, "The Cowboy's Sweet By and By," "The Cowboy's Dream," and "The Grand Roundup," found in John Lomax's 1910 seminal collection, *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* (ex. 2). Lomax's anthology represented a repository of American cowboy balladry supposedly tied to the music making of the frontier, thereby promoting the figure of the Anglo-Saxon singing cowboy. Yet instead of collecting music directly from the cowboys of the western range, Lomax selected many of the cowboy ballads from print media, in which cowboy songs had been in circulation.[73] Variations of "The Cowboy's Dream," for instance, had appeared in magazines and fictional short stories before Lomax included it in his anthology.[74] Regardless of its ties to commercial culture, Lomax explained that "Cowboy's Dream" was integral to the music of Texas camp meetings in convincing cowboys to embrace Christian theology.[75] Drawing from New Testament imagery, the ballad warns itinerant cowhands that their faith and morality will be judged on that fateful day. Without the appropriate marking from the "Riders of Judgment," the cowboy will travel the "blazed" road "to perdition" rather than the saintly, "narrow trail . . . to the bright mystic region."


Last night as I lay on the prai - rie, and looked at the stars in the sky, I
5
won - dered if ev - ver a cow - boy could drift to that sweet by - and - by.
9
Roll on, roll on, Roll on, lit - tle do - gies, roll on, roll on,
13
Roll on, roll on, Roll on, lit - tle do - gies, roll on.

Example 2. "The Cowboy's Dream," in John Avery Lomax and Alan Lomax, *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads*, rev. ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1966). Transposed from C major to F major and from 3/4 meter to 6/8 meter for the ease of comparison.

In contrast to the cowboy ballads, "Cowboy's Heaven" isn't about moral uncertainty. Instead, it underscores the cowboy's fragile position in his material life as well as his assumed place in the divine hereafter. The western protagonist is not a valiant hero, taming and settling the West, but rather a character who verges on the tragic because of his long and exhausted days of toiling on the land. In realizing such a tale, the songwriter, Frankie Marvin, modifies the musical setting of the original ballad by blending folk music with a Tin Pan Alley song form. Though "Cowboy's Heaven" continues to be in strophic form, where each stanza is set to the same music, the phrase structure of each section is in an AABA form (ex. 3).[76] The A phrases borrow from the music of the cowboy ballads, whereas the bridge consists of a newly composed phrase that emphasizes the vulnerable position of the cowboy.[77] The bridge's conventional heightened language of dominant harmonies and a rising melodic line focuses the listener's attention on the mounting dejection of the cowboy and his horse companion, "Old Paint." As in "That Silver-Haired Daddy of Mine," "Cowboy's Heaven" signals the tenuous relationship between masculinity and agrarian life. For most men of the 1930s, rural labor—southern tenancy or midwestern farming—did not produce economic security or masculine authority. This ballad's portrayal of the cowboy, nevertheless, implies that the West could still be a place in which the male figure emerges as a model of virtue. In the concluding A phrase, the pious cowboy understands that his arduous course on earth will ensure his heavenly existence. Thus, if economic standing could no longer define a sense of manliness


A
F B♭ F C7
To - night I'm a tired wea - ry cow - boy, I've been in the sad - dle all day,
5
A
F B♭ F C7 F
Search-ing the hills and the val - leys for cat - tle that strayed a - way. 'Old
9
B
C7 F C7
Paint' is tired and leg wea - ry, His feet are bro - ken and sore, But
13
A
F B♭ F C7 F
some day our work will be o - ver and we'll ride on that o - ther shore.

Example 3. "The Cowboy's Heaven," words and music by Frankie Marvin and Gene Autry. Recorded by Gene Autry with guitar accompaniment, 1933. Copyright © 1933 (Renewed). The Gene Autry Music Company and Universal Music Corp. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

in the 1930s, then Victorian principles recast in the myths of the West perhaps could.

In his 1933 songbook *Rhymes of the Range*, Autry included "Cowboy's Heaven" with other standard cowboy songs, such as "The Cowboy's Meditation" and "When the Work's All Done This Fall," popularized by Lomax's *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads*. Connecting "Cowboy's Heaven" to the music that represented the folk culture of the cowboy, the publicity of *Rhymes of the Range* reshaped Autry's song of masculine vulnerability into an unadulterated musical relic of the past:

> In reviving the popularity of the long forgotten music of the cow country and the frontier, the author of this little book has made a distinct contribution to American music. The songs he writes and sings, are as fresh and clean as the open prairies from which they spring.[78]

Autry, appearing as an "authentic" cowboy, preserved a performance tradition tied to the "fresh and clean" open prairies.[79] In doing so, the singing cowboy continued a well-established practice of circulating the songs of Lomax's collection in popular culture. For example, the first commercially recorded cowboy songs, Bentley Ball's 1919 renditions of "Jesse James" and "The Dying Cowboy," were drawn directly from *Cowboys Songs and Other Frontier Ballads*. Radio's "The Original Cowboy

Singer," Carl T. Sprague (who sold close to nine hundred thousand copies of his 1925 recording of "When the Work's All Done This Fall") also turned to Lomax's anthology to record and perform "legitimate" songs of the West.

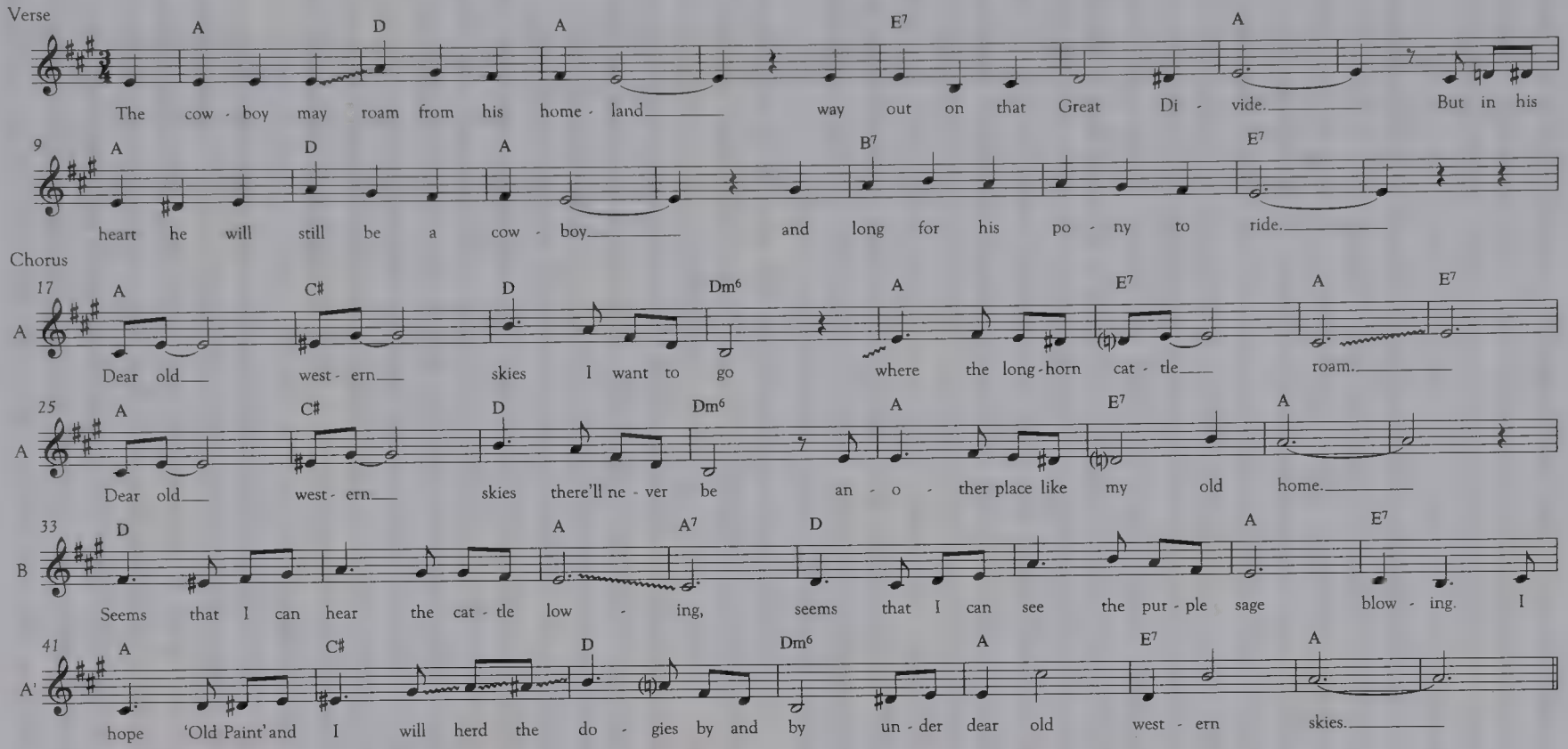
The irony of many cowboy ballads lies in the way they tell maudlin tales that are at odds with the romantic accounts held dear by the popular imagination. In standard ballads, such as "The Dying Cowboy" and "When the Work's All Done This Fall," the cowboy meets death while driving cattle across the lone prairies or welcomes his arrival to the "promised land," as in Autry's ballad "Cowboy's Heaven." In contrast to these narratives, Tin Pan Alley songwriters molded the West into a bucolic enclave or a pastoral backdrop to courtship and love. An early example, "Cheyenne" (written by Egbert Van Alstyne and Harry Williams in 1905) is about a cowboy from Cheyenne, Wyoming, who convinces the young maiden "Shy Anne" to be his wife.[80] But more significant were the songwriters of the Golden Age of Tin Pan Alley (1920–40) who wrote some of the most memorable tunes of life on the open range: "When It's Springtime in the Rockies" (by Mary Hale Woolsey, Robert Sauer, and Milt Taggart, 1923) or "The Last Round-Up" (by Billy Hill, 1933). Tin Pan Alley's idyllic settings for cowboy songs presented a heightened lyricism rendered by popular and country performers (namely Bing Crosby, Gene Autry, the Girls of the Golden West, and the Sons of the Pioneers). The genre thus brought cowboy songs closer to the aesthetics of popular music, consumed largely by an audience of white middle and upper classes.[81] As musicologist Charles Hamm has demonstrated, 1920s and 1930s popular songs—notably Irving Berlin's "How Deep Is the Ocean?" (1932) or Gene Austin's performance of "My Blue Heaven" (1927)—were "slower in tempo with more lyrical melodic lines," in contrast to the rhythmic improvisation of earlier New Orleans jazz numbers.[82] Expressive melodies rendered by popular crooners, Gene Austin or Bing Crosby, or by "sweet" dance bands, such as Guy Lombardo and his Royal Canadians, swept away the concerns and distress of Depression-era listeners.[83]

As Autry emerged as a singing cowboy over the airwaves of WLS, he incorporated the aesthetics of popular music in his western songs. Before he launched his film career, Autry recorded in 1934 his first Tin Pan Alley cowboy song, "Dear Old Western Skies," written by Smiley Burnette (who adopted the idioms of popular music in a number of his cowboy and country songs and would later become Autry's famous sidekick in film). The verse begins in a similar manner to a cowboy ballad, with a basic harmonic progression and repetitive and stepwise melodic movement set in triple meter. Initially, Autry sounds as if he is singing

another one of his folk-like ballads, demonstrating his authenticity as a cowhand. What follows, though, is an elaborate chorus, in which Autry voices his longing for the mythic West. The chorus's graceful melodic lines shaped by an assortment of differing rhythmic motives and colored by varied harmonic language mold the West into a glamorous space where the cowboy freely roams. Specifically, the chorus begins with an ascending melody that gradually rises to the phrase's apex—an added sixth of the subdominant, typical of Tin Pan Alley songwriting. Giving the impression of reaching for and holding on to those western skies, Autry lingers over the appoggiatura on the word "skies" until his vocal line gracefully tumbles down an octave. The melodic fluidity suggests the unfettered movement of the cowboy on the open range. Rather than depicting the plights of the overworked cowboy (as in "Cowboy's Heaven" or a number of cowboy ballads), the western figure appears free to search for those "dear old western skies." The opening harmonic progression of the chorus, I–III–IV–iv, further underlines the mobility of the cowboy. The mediant implies momentarily a harmonic direction away from the tonic to the submediant before it moves to the subdominant. Relying upon the musical practices of Tin Pan Alley, Autry leaves behind his identity as a laboring or morose cowhand, demonstrated in his earlier songs, to promote the western hero's ability to transcend the class and material limitations of the era (ex. 4).

In addition to his recording, Autry performed "Dear Old Western Skies" on radio and film at a time when the electrical technology of the microphone encouraged singers to croon their melodic lines. In its ability to pick up the soft whispers and murmurs of the artist, the microphone enabled singers to provide intimate forms of vocal expression. This was in contrast to previous manners of delivery in which popular music vocalists "belted" their sung lines over accompanying ensembles. Thus, it was in the late 1920s and early 1930s that crooning became a "major cultural phenomenon" with a nationwide following for singing stars such as Rudy Vallee, Gene Austin, and Bing Crosby. But the particular singing style also gave rise to public debates about the cultural and aesthetic merits of crooning.[84]

Initially, crooning was associated with the singing of women, minstrel, and black performers on the vaudevillian stage. Historian Allison McCracken explains in her study of Rudy Vallee and Bing Crosby that "as long as the term 'crooner' was applied to women and male minstrel singers it was not controversial. But when band singers in the mid-to-late 1920s began to be called crooners, it was meant to suggest the emasculation and artlessness of the singer."[85] At a time when society questioned the cultural authority of masculinity and "homosexuality


Verse
A D A E7 A
The cow - boy may roam from his home - land way out on that Great Di - vide. But in his
9 A D A B7 E7
heart he will still be a cow - boy and long for his po - ny to ride.
Chorus
17 A C♯ D Dm6 A E7 A E7
A Dear old west - ern skies I want to go where the long-horn cat - tle roam.
25 A C♯ D Dm6 A E7 A
A Dear old west - ern skies there'll ne - ver be an - o - ther place like my old home.
33 D A A7 D A E7
B Seems that I can hear the cat - tle low - ing, seems that I can see the pur - ple sage blow - ing. I
41 A C♯ D Dm6 A E7 A
A' hope 'Old Paint' and I will herd the do - gies by and by un - der dear old west - ern skies.

Example 4. "Dear Old Western Skies," words and music by Smiley Burnette and Gene Autry. Recorded by Gene Autry with mandolin, guitar, violin, and string bass, instrumentalists unknown, 1935.

hovered like a specter," white men's quiet and sincere deliveries appeared to flout all gender and racial norms, causing conservative cultural critics to denounce the popular singers of the day as emasculated dandies.[86]

In his research on the aesthetic debates of crooning, Jonathan Greenberg delineates the constitutive elements that defined the style: soft singing in the falsetto range, nasality, slurring to and from pitches, and the "sonic impression of effortlessness."[87] In "Dear Old Western Skies," Autry employs many of these vocal practices. From the beginning of the song, Autry signals that he is a crooner by sliding up a fourth from the opening pitch. He further emphasizes this vocal technique with elongated vocal slides to and from sustained pitches, underlining the words "roam" and "lowing" in the chorus. In addition to his use of *portamento*, Autry often nasally sings the higher notes of the melody. By pushing air through the nasal chamber, he provides a thin, quiet sound—a vocal sonority that many cultural critics and vocal pedagogues referred to as effeminate whining.[88] But unlike popular crooners such as Rudy Vallee, known for high, light singing, Autry does not extend the use of nasality to the lower range of his chest voice. Rather, Autry's lower register provides a sonorous quality of security and warmth, differing from his airy-sounding upper range.

It appears that Autry developed the lower part of his baritone register to render artfully the melodic breadth of his Tin Pan Alley songs. In many of his early blues recordings, such as "Blue Yodel No. 4," and sentimental numbers, such as "No One to Call Me Darling," Autry often constricted the tone nasally and sang in a limited range of a fifth that was located within the upper part of his baritone register. But in his lyrical songs of the West, Autry produced round, reverberating tones that enriched the embellished melodic language. In general, his vocal range was more similar to that of the popular crooner Bing Crosby. Both Crosby and Autry recorded Billy Hill's "The Last Roundup" in the same key, for instance. As the vocal practice of crooning was under contestation, Crosby's baritone voice presented a sonically conventional version of masculinity, which contrasted the "effeminate" sounds of Vallee's high tenor range.[89]

Autry was also successful in maintaining his masculinity with a vocal register that sounded like a "proper" man. Yet rather than asserting a strong voice of power, Autry, in "Dear Old Western Skies," demonstrates a quiet confidence as his high, nasal sound dissolves into the warm rounded tones of his lower range. His cultivated manner of singing gives the impression of effortlessness, enhanced by his relaxed treatment of the beat. He falls behind and pulls ahead of the guitar's steady pulse

with an unhurried ease. Autry's vocal style, developed in radio and on record, contributed to his fame as a poised singing cowboy, capable of handling society's wrongdoers but sensitive enough to express his inner thoughts and feelings through song. In essence, he placed his vocality closer to the codes of popular music. Though the 1930s were an era when the aesthetic merits of crooning were debated and its representations of masculinity were disputed, Autry's performance practices and choice of repertory instilled a sense of respectability and glamour in country music. In essence, the cowboy positioned his musical narratives of an agrarian utopia in the mainstream of the popular imagination.

On WLS, Autry was not alone in singing intimately to a radio audience. Not only did the *National Barn Dance* evoke the raucous music making of the Saturday evening barn dance, it had become an extension of the domestic sphere through heartfelt forms of vocal music (Three Neighbor Boys' "sweet" harmonies and Grace Wilson's popular melodies of yesteryear, for example). As previously mentioned, WLS cultivated an extensive array of music, including popular songs and old-time ballads performed by small vocal ensembles or soloists. As Paul Tyler explains, it was this blending of the "intimacy of radio and the familiarity of old-time music" that made it possible to incorporate urban popular-song artists with rural musicians.[90] Within a setting of rural conviviality, WLS was able to broadcast popular music, including Autry's stylized crooning, alongside sentimental ballads into the parlors and living rooms of its radio listeners.

Autry's prominence on a host of WLS programs, which included the coast-to-coast broadcasts of the *National Barn Dance*, convinced Republic Studios in Hollywood to produce films that featured the radio star. In his western films, Autry simply enacted his well-known persona, a singing cowboy who risked appearing effeminate.[91] In his first feature-length film, *Tumbling Tumbleweeds* (1935), for example, Autry plays the role of a singing cowboy who performs with a traveling medicine show to rural and small towns in the Southwest. During a performance of his hit song, "That Silver-Haired Daddy of Mine," a cowboy yells to Autry, "We ain't got no use for lavender cowboys in this town."[92] Though Autry's music making is viewed as a sign of effeminacy, the singing cowboy manages to maintain his masculinity by unraveling the mysteries of the elite's corruption and greed, plaguing the rural community. Apart from the typical fight and chase scenes, the singing cowboy's ethical standing is apparent in the ways he strives to protect the underclass from the law-breaking schemes of the landowning lords. Similar to the themes of his early repertory of cowboy songs, Autry proves that virtue

and morality—in effect, his Victorian principles—make him a valiant cowboy.[93]

Though Autry was far from the only figure portraying the myths of the West, few singing cowboys could compete with Autry's mass-mediated popularity in the 1930s. Even his more illustrious contemporary, Tex Ritter, who sang on various regional radio programs in New York City, appeared on Broadway in Lynn Riggs's play *Green Grow the Lilacs*, signed a recording contract with ARC in 1933, and then starred in myriad westerns, could not compare with Autry's success.[94] As a "real cowboy," who had been "collecting western and mountain songs" since he was a "youngster," Ritter's pseudo-authentic portrayals of frontier culture did not easily extend to the aesthetics of popular music that appealed to a heterogeneous audience.[95] In "traditional" ballads, such as "A-Ridin' Ole Paint" and "Get Along Little Doggies," Ritter belts out the melody in his bass range as if he has no need for a microphone.[96] In the Tin Pan Alley number "Take Me Back to My Boots and Saddle," Ritter's gravelly voice fails to provide the artless phrasing that the song requires to transport the listener to the mythic West.[97] His manner of singing may have prevented him from securing a position on a radio station with a broad regional and national following. Autry, on the other hand, had built a national fan base of radio listeners, who flocked to the theaters to watch their favorite crooning cowboy on film.[98]

Despite the fact that Autry was the leading singing cowboy of the 1930s, the Sons of the Pioneers were integral in glamorizing the West in their radio broadcasts on Hollywood's KFWB, on recordings for Decca Records, and in western films. The members of the ensemble, Bob Nolan, Tim Spencer, and Leonard Slye (who would later adopt the stage name Roy Rogers), blended their individual voices in mellifluous harmonies, shaping the West to be a place of homosocial camaraderie. But besides their musical performances, the prolific songwriters Nolan and Spencer provided western singers with a repertory influenced by the practices of Tin Pan Alley. Nolan's "Tumbling Tumbleweeds" (1932), for instance, gives the sonic impression of the cowboy languidly "drifting along with the tumbling tumbleweeds." In a slow tempo, the chorus begins with a descending sequential chromatic melody and a harmonic progression, IV–III–IV–I. Similar to the harmonic language of "Dear Old Western Skies," the borrowed major mediant implies a possible move away from the home key to the submediant.[99] The harmonic writing combined with a melodic sequence that descends chromatically for eight measures before settling on the first scale degree depicts musically the cowboy's roaming ways. Gene Autry popularized Nolan's song in *Tumbling Tumbleweed* (1935), a film that questioned the masculinity

of a western hero who croons dreamily of wandering the western frontier.

The Singing Cowgirl Patsy Montana

Within the musical context of the singing cowboy, the singing cowgirl Patsy Montana also established her artistic voice by expanding the possibilities of gender identities. In general, Montana's fame resounded in her ability to negotiate heterosexual norms with the cowgirl's desires for independence in the mythic West. Beginning her radio career in California in the late 1920s, Montana honed her singing cowgirl persona as a member of the Montana Cowgirls with two other women performers, Lorraine McIntire and Ruth DeMondrum. Stuart Hamblen, a songwriter and performer who hosted his own radio show of country music, managed the ensemble and encouraged the trio to adopt the familial imagery popular in country music.[100] Under Hamblen's tutelage, the Montana Cowgirls performed on his Inglewood radio program in addition to several radio stations throughout California and Oregon (KMTR, KHJ, and KGW), starred in the movie short *Lightning Express* in 1932, and accompanied the roping and riding personality Montie Montana in live shows, where the cowgirl trio displayed their skills at horseback riding.[101]

Their success as an ensemble ended when McIntire and DeMondrum chose marriage over their performance careers. Montana, however, continued to pursue her calling as a radio and recording star. After returning home to Arkansas during the summer of 1933, Montana followed her mother's advice to meet the Girls of the Golden West, a featured sister duet on WLS with whom Montana's mother had been in correspondence.[102] From the cowgirl duet, Montana found out that WLS was looking for a lead singer for the popular string band ensemble, the Prairie Ramblers. With her singing, yodeling, and burgeoning songwriting skills, Montana secured the position, "sweeping in like a prairie breeze from the West," as stated in the 1936 *WLS Family Album*.[103]

In publicity photos, Montana either appeared with the Prairie Ramblers or as a solo performer in the guise of a singing cowgirl who purposely sought the cultural freedoms of the West. In a 1935 publicity shot, for example, Montana stands by a campfire, one foot hoisted up on a tree stump, her guitar resting against her leg (a similar pose to that of Autry on the front cover of his songbook). Montana's stance implies not merely that she takes pleasure in the freedoms of the open range but that her experience and inclination equip her to roam the plains on equal footing to the cowboy (see fig. 3). As Montana stated in an

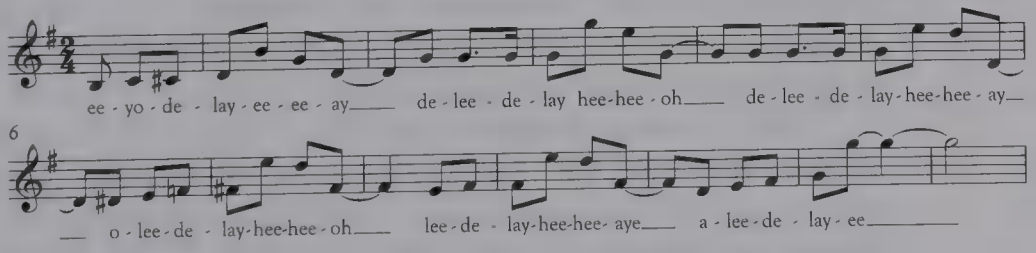
Figure 3. A 1930s publicity photograph of Patsy Montana.

interview, "I didn't want to look too sissy. To me a cowgirl wasn't supposed to look sissy. I'd roll my sleeves up . . . and I wore a gun."[104]

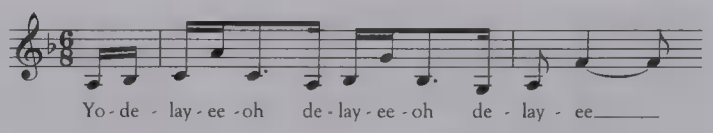
Her embodiment of independence, framed in the romance of the West, extended to her musical repertory. Montana and the Prairie Ramblers performed on radio and recorded her famous 1935 song "I Want to Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart."[105] The title of the song appears to signal that the cowgirl's access to the symbolic advantages of the West might depend, in fact, on heterosexual romance. The song's lyrics and Montana's musical performance, however, point in a different direction: toward the realization of a cowgirl's life in a realm not limited by the constraints of societal normativity. Though Montana opens and ends the first verse with the nominal phrase, the cowgirl does not develop a narrative of romantic love. Rather, she elaborates upon her longing for the metaphoric freedoms of frontier culture: rope and ride, yodel, and strum a guitar before retiring next to a sleeping herd of cattle. Thus, Montana's cowboy serves less as an idealized sexual partner than as a conduit to all the promises of "the West."

Montana's musical narrative of the capable cowgirl fits with the musical sensibilities of her midwestern audience. "I Want to Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart" is a jazz-inflected polka replete with yodels, gesturing to the musical cultures of northern and central Europe.[106] Well aware of her audience of European immigrants, Montana explained, "We always had a good following right in the city of Chicago, because of a lot of Polish people there and Irish and, you know, just all kinds of nationalities."[107] Montana and the Prairie Ramblers rendered the polka with the dance rhythms popular in the 1930s, a necessary component to sell records. Montana, who had secured a recording contract with ARC, recalled Art Satherley's guidance in the recording session of "I Want to Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart": "My songs had to have a definite beat or they didn't sell. Remember, that was the western-swing era. But there would be two mikes in the studio. I would be on one side with a bass fiddle, and Art would be on the other side of my mike. . . . If he couldn't feel that beat, the number was out."[108] In Montana's song, the violin plays syncopated melodic lines to the prominent bass part that provides the typical oompah pattern of the polka. The string bass's steady tonic and dominant movement on the downbeats is reinforced by the guitar's bass notes alternating with full chords on the upbeats, providing a strong pulse that must have pleased Satherley.

In this lively polka, Montana begins her song with one of the most virtuosic yodels in 1930s country music. Invoking the Alpine tradition of yodeling, Montana yodels a major-mode melody that demonstrates her extensive upper register (ex. 5). Yodeling is a vocalization that uses the larynx muscles and glottal stops to accentuate the abrupt change of vocal register between the chest and head voice.[109] Even though women have three distinct registers—chest, an extensive midrange, and head—the vocal break occurs between the chest and head voice. As the vocal pedagogue Richard Miller explains, a woman singer "is capable of making a shift in registers from chest to head, in the lower range of her voice, but she cannot produce the marked transition sound from middle



Example 5. Patsy Montana's opening yodel in "I Want to Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart."



Example 6. Gene Autry's opening yodel in "Cowboy's Heaven."

voice into head voice."[110] Even if a woman yodels from the midrange (where she can sing notes in either her chest or head range), she is still featuring a break between the chest and head voice, not between the head register and the higher "whistle" range (where a laryngeal whistle is all that most women can produce), as some musicologists have claimed.[111] Unlike many male vocalists who sing mainly in the chest register, women often yodel to vibrant-sounding head registers, cultivated through singing.

This was certainly the case on WLS, where women performers were known for their Alpine yodels. Christine, "The Little Swiss Yodeler," rendered yodel songs that could "go almost as high as the Swiss Alps where her ancestors used to live."[112] Likewise, the DeZurik Sisters, invoking the nineteenth-century yodeling family, appeared in traditional German dress and were known for their acrobatic yodeling in harmony in which their voices often demonstrated the extreme ranges of their head registers.[113] In contrast to such virtuosic yodeling, few male yodelers, especially in 1930s country music, could or tried to yodel in such a manner. Extending the yodeling practices of vaudeville to country music, Jimmie Rodgers was known for popularizing the yodel in his recordings of the blues, sentimental music, and cowboy songs.[114] But unlike the extended range of Montana's yodels and those of her female peers on WLS, Rodgers's yodels usually unfold in a limited range of sequential sixths, in which he ascends to and descends from the sustained notes of his thin-sounding falsetto range.[115] With the sonic impression of loneliness in his sentimental tunes or bravado in some of his blues songs, Rodgers's vocalizations influenced his contemporaries and successors in country music, including the singing cowboy Autry. In "Cowboy's Heaven," for example, Autry's opening yodel demonstrates a narrow range of descending sixths, in which his sonorous chest voice differs in timbre from his airy-sounding upper register (ex. 6).

But there were some male yodelers of Montana's generation, namely Elton Britt, who could demonstrate the brilliance of Alpine yodeling. Britt, who started his career in California as a member of the Beverly Hillbillies at the same time that Montana started performing as one of the Montana Cowgirls, developed a reputation as the "World's

Highest Yodeler."[116] In the conclusion of his signature piece "Chime Bells" (1934), Britt yodels in double time before he leaps an octave to a resounding high F_5 that he sustains for an entire minute.[117] Though Montana doesn't yodel in double time or hold the concluding note of her yodel for such lengths, she repeatedly reaches the high G_5. In fact, she ends her yodel with a show-stopping octave leap to G_5, a step higher than Britt's concluding F_5 in a dramatic move to challenge Britt's legacy and promote her own performance abilities in a song concerning a woman's yearning for the societal freedoms usually reserved for the cowboy.

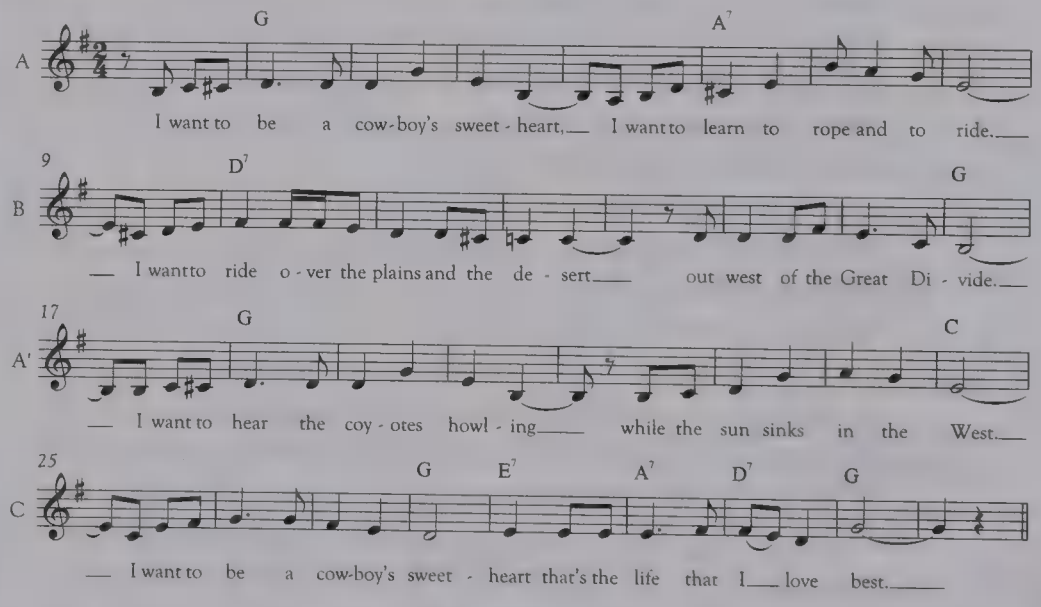
But the popular imagination may have understood the high-reaching yodels of Britt, Montana, and others as expressions that signaled a "feminized" vocality, albeit a virtuosic one. In the late 1940s, Britt teamed up with Rosalie Allen (who launched her recording career by covering "I Want to Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart," replete with yodels). They performed a number of yodel tunes, such as "Tennessee Yodel Polka" and "Beyond the Sunset" in which they exchanged elaborate yodeling passages.[118] In "Tennessee Yodel Polka," Allen begins the song about a "handsome boy" who lives in a "little town in Tennessee among the mountain tide." She sings he "loved to do the polka" and "what they called the girlie sigh with his." Yet before Allen can complete the phrase, Britt interjects an extravagant yodel, showcasing frequent vocal breaks to the upper register, which are meant to represent the sighs of a young woman. Indeed, his yodeling seemed to be often linked to the feminine. His 1941 recording of "She Taught Me to Yodel" explains that he learned to yodel from a "yodelin' gal in a Swiss chalet" located on the hilltops of Switzerland.[119]

Though Montana's yodeling in "I Want to Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart" may have challenged Britt's reputation as the "World's Highest Yodeler," her vocalizations suggested an acceptable performance mode for a woman singer. Just as Autry mitigated the perceived effeminacy of the crooner with a manly sounding baritone register, Montana negotiated her portrayals of gender through her vocal delivery. Not only did her yodeling emphasize the upper register, a conventional range for women, she also invoked a nostalgic setting. She performed in a musical context with other women performers—such as Christine, "The Little Swiss Yodeler," or the DeZurik Sisters—whose yodels to the heights of their upper range represented the music making of the Alpine region. Thus, Montana translated the vocalizations that represented the vastness of the Alps into a sonority that evoked the openness of the American western range, where a "singing cowgirl" like Montana could be free to roam. By merging the cowgirl's agency engendered by her

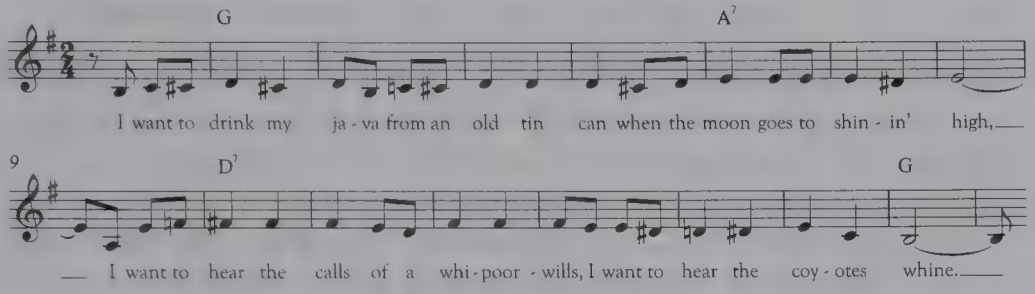
vocal virtuosity with the pastoral, the singing cowgirl could provide an idealized portrayal of femininity.

In addition to establishing her talents as a vocalist in "I Want to Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart," Montana demonstrated her abilities as a songwriter. Incorporating an intertextual web of song sources, Montana carefully blended "traditional" music with popular idioms to emphasize further the western heroine's longing for the commonly perceived promises of frontier culture. Montana begins her tune in a manner resembling Stuart Hamblen's 1932 "Texas Plains," a song that portrays a cowboy's desires for a life not dictated by societal constraints, while he listens to the "the song of a whippoorwill" and "a coyote cry" (ex. 7). "Texas Plains" is also a polka with a repeated harmonic progression (I–V7/V–V7–I) that shapes the song into an ABAB form, a common pattern of the Tin Pan Alley chorus. But the repetitive structure of "Texas Plains" combined with the straightforward harmonic progression of three chords and the narrow melodic range signals the idioms of "hillbilly" or folk music of this period (ex. 8).

Drawing upon the sonic qualities of a "traditional" cowboy song, Montana includes the A and B phrases of Hamblen's tune for the opening two phrases of her piece. In the following phrase, Montana departs from Hamblen's ABAB pattern, repetitive harmonic progression, and limited melodic movement. Instead, she writes an expansive


A
G
A7
I want to be a cow-boy's sweet - heart. I want to learn to rope and to ride.
9
B
D7
G
I want to ride o - ver the plains and the de - sert out west of the Great Di - vide.
17
A'
G
C
I want to hear the coy - otes howl - ing while the sun sinks in the West.
25
C
G
E7
A7
D7
G
I want to be a cow-boy's sweet - heart that's the life that I love best.

Example 7. "I Want to Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart," words and music by Patsy Montana. Recorded by Montana with the Prairie Ramblers: Tex Atchinson, violin, Chuck Hurt, mandolin, Salty Holmes, guitar, and Jack Taylor string bass, 1935. Copyright © 1935 Songs of Universal, Inc. Copyright renewed. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

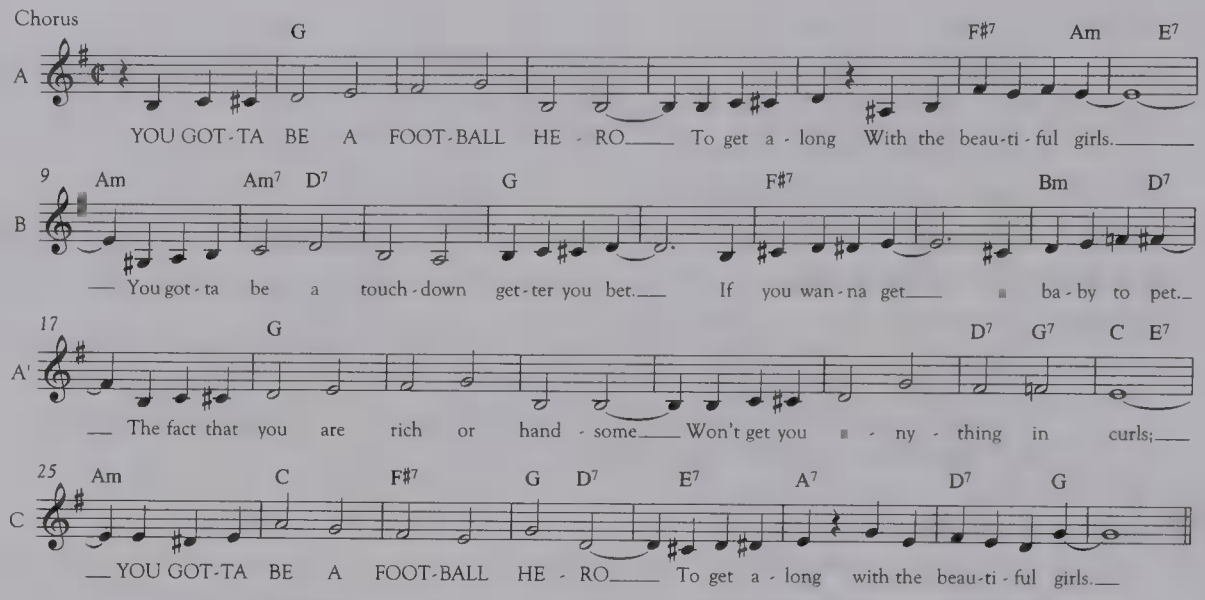

G
A7
I want to drink my ja - va from an old tin can when the moon goes to shin - in' high,
9
D7
G
I want to hear the calls of a whi - poor - wills, I want to hear the coy - otes whine.

Example 8. "Texas Plains," words and music by Stuart Hamblen. Recorded by Gene Autry with the Prairie Ramblers, 1935. Copyright © 1935 Songs of Universal, Inc. Copyright renewed. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Transposed from C major to G major for the ease of comparison.

melodic line that molds each section into an ABAC pattern, in which the last two phrases demonstrate a more adventurous harmonic progression. The song ends with a circle-of-fifth movement, common in many Tin Pan Alley tunes.

Including the rhetoric of popular music, Montana may have turned to another source to shape her musical narrative: the 1933 song "You Gotta Be a Football Hero (To Get along with the Beautiful Girls)," written by Tin Pan Alley songwriters Al Sherman, Buddy Fields, and Al Lewis. Introduced on radio by Fred Waring and his Pennsylvanians, "You've Gotta Be a Football Hero" became one of the most often heard football anthems at college games. The song was also used in a 1933 Popeye cartoon, in which Popeye scores touchdown after touchdown to win back the heart of his beloved Olive Oyl from his contender Brutus. During halftime, Olive Oyl sings the last two phrases of the chorus, dressed as a cheerleader.

The cowgirl tune adopts the music to the title phrase of the chorus "You gotta be a football hero" for its melody that accompanies the lyrics "I want to be a cowboy's sweetheart" (ex. 9). But the moments of greatest similarity between the two songs are the concluding phrases, where Montana departs from the harmonic design of Hamblen's song and follows both the melodic and harmonic pattern of the very phrases that Olive Oyl sings in the Popeye cartoon. In particular, both songs move from the tonic to the subdominant in their respective A′ phrases before launching into the conventional circle-of-fifths progression that ends each piece. The return of the opening melody, supported by a slower harmonic rhythm, frames the dramatic conclusion created by the eventual resolution of the secondary dominants. As in the football anthem, Montana constructs a similar musical affect of exhilaration in her final


Chorus
A
G
F♯7 Am E7
YOU GOT-TA BE A FOOT-BALL HE - RO To get a - long With the beau-ti - ful girls.
9
B
Am Am7 D7 G F♯7 Bm D7
— You got - ta be a touch - down get - ter you bet. If you wan - na get ba - by to pet.
17
A'
G D7 G7 C E7
— The fact that you are rich or hand - some Won't get you - ny - thing in curls;
25
C
Am C F♯7 G D7 E7 A7 D7 G
— YOU GOT-TA BE A FOOT-BALL HE - RO To get a - long with the beau-ti - ful girls.

Example 9. From the chorus of "You Gotta Be a Football Hero," words and music by Al Sherman, Buddy Fields, and Al Lewis. Published by Leo Frist, 1933. Transposed from C to G for the ease of comparison.

statement. The cowgirl's desires seem to direct her audiences to rally behind the protagonist's wishes for the mythical West, where female autonomy and gestures toward idealized love can easily coexist.

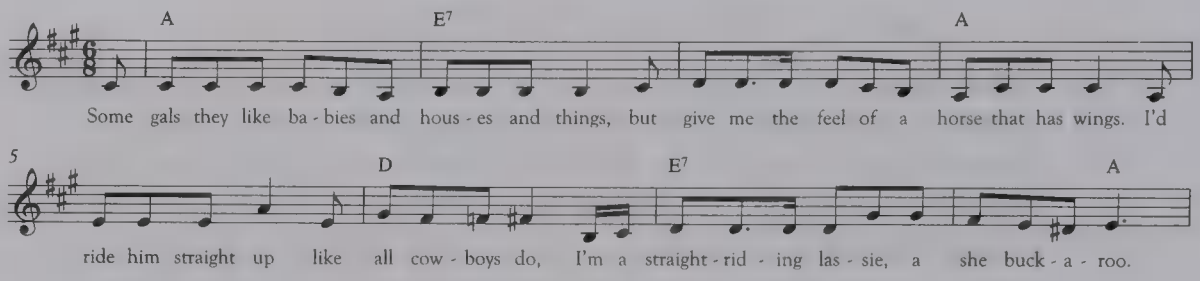
Montana's signature song presented a model of femininity with options—independence or even a mediation of autonomy through romantic love. Just as Autry's western music responded to the concerns of masculinity, the image of the cowgirl engaged with the 1930s debates of gender. She could roam the open range without completely abandoning feminine norms. That is, Montana's song suggested that women could indeed strive for roles that had been gendered masculine—such as the breadwinner—without relinquishing all societal norms. Her radio audience appeared to embrace Montana's cowgirl song. Montana and the Prairie Ramblers introduced "I Want to Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart" to regional audiences of WLS and of New York's WOR (where they performed for part of 1935 in a show sponsored by Kolor Back). While in New York, they recorded the song for ARC in 1935, and then returned to WLS to broadcast it nationally from the stage of the *National Barn Dance*. In 1936, Montana and the Prairie Ramblers emerged as one of the most popular acts on WLS, declared by a competition in which listeners voted for their favorite performers.[120] Montana even performed the song in Autry's 1939 western *The Colorado Sunset*, where she played a waitress searching for the symbolic freedoms of the West.[121]

Cowboy Balladry and "The She Buckaroo"

From the success of "I Want to Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart," Montana continued to write and record material that portrayed the western heroine. Unlike Autry, her initial fame wasn't from performing maudlin songs that bemoaned the loss of family, home, and a rural past, even though she did record some sentimental numbers such as "I Love My Daddy Too" (1932), a song that reminisces about the love of one's father, and "The Wheel of the Wagon Is Broken" (1936), a mournful account of bidding farewell to ranch life. But the musical and cultural significance of Montana's career lay in the ways she imparted the myths of the West with a distinctly women's perspective. In addition to her pop-infused cowgirl songs, she also wrote and performed strophic ballads that invoked "authentic" portrayals of the music making of the open range. Several of Montana's folk-like ballads, "The She Buckaroo" (1936), "A Rip Rip Snortin' Two-Gun Gal" (1939), "Texas Tomboy" (1941), and "Wench from Wyoming" (1941), placed the self-directed cowgirl in the "Wild West," where she adopted the prowess of her predecessors, the sharpshooter Annie Oakley, or the outlaw Calamity Jane.

Montana's "The She Buckeroo" appears to be an autobiographical narrative about the cowgirl's pursuit of a western life, in which she prefers taming wild horses and defeating cowboys at roping contests to the trappings of domesticity. Montana begins the song in her chest register with the declamatory line: "Some gals they like babies and houses and things." By using her chest voice in a neutral manner to state the assumed desires of women, Montana creates a distance between the usual constructions of femininity and her own self-fashioning. Yet when she voices her wish to participate in cowboy culture, she leaves behind her declamatory vocal line to sing a more lyrical melody in her head voice: "But give me the feel of a horse that has wings. I'd ride him straight up like all cowboys do." As the ascending melody reaches its climax on the word "up," the music provides the image of Montana on a rearing horse, a musical enactment usually reserved to suggest a cowboy's virility. In fact, Montana works to undermine the cowboy's prowess at the local rodeos, where she wins the roping and riding competitions, leaving the "he-men to feel blue." Certain of her talents, Montana pines to ride and tame the unruly stallion Strawberry Roan. She'll "make him hop out like an ol' kangaroo, I'm a tough ridin' lassie, a she buckaroo" (ex. 10).

What makes the song about a "she buckaroo" convincing as a cowboy ballad is that Montana's musical and narrative source is a familiar cowboy song: "The Strawberry Roan," written in 1915 by Curly

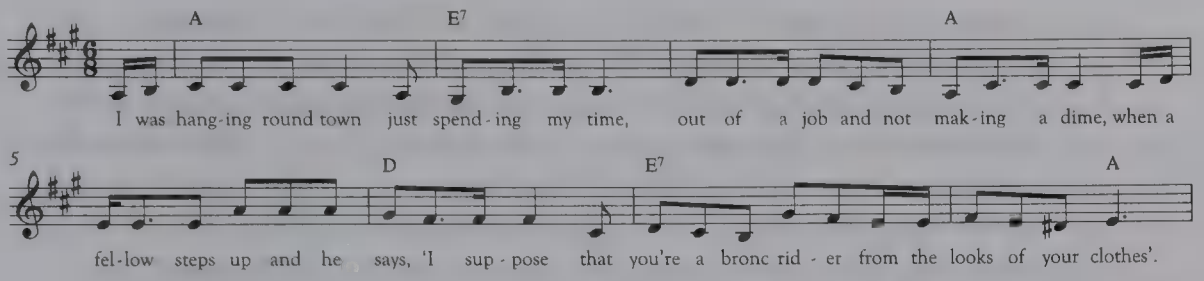

A
E7
A
Some gals they like ba - bies and hous - es and things, but give me the feel of a horse that has wings. I'd
5
D
E7
A
ride him straight up like all cow - boys do, I'm a straight - rid - ing las - sie, a she buck - a - roo.

Example 10. "The She Buckaroo," words and music by Patsy Montana. Recorded by Patsy Montana and the Prairie Ramblers, 1936. Copyright © 1936 Songs of Universal, Inc. Copyright renewed. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Fletcher (1892–1954).[122] It tells a humorous tale of an experienced bronco's failed attempts to tame a wild stallion. This overly confident cowboy has never met a horse he couldn't tame until he attempts to break the Strawberry Roan, who bucks the cowboy into the stratosphere, leaving him "sitting way up on the sky." When the bronco eventually falls "back to earth," he declares, "I bet my money there's no man alive, that can stay with ole Strawberry when he makes his high dive." By the time Montana wrote and recorded her song, she must have heard at least one of the many renditions of "The Strawberry Roan." The Arizona Wranglers had performed the tune on radio in the late 1920s, Ken Maynard sang a version of it in the eponymous 1933 film, and it also appeared in Lynn Riggs's 1930 play *Green Grow the Lilacs* (ex. 11).

Montana, however, wasn't the only one to write a song relating to "The Strawberry Roan." A number of tunes demonstrated a distinct preoccupation with Fletcher's humorous portrayal of the cowboy's impotency.[123] Several ballads, "The Man Who Rode the Strawberry Roan," "Good-bye Old Strawberry Roan," and "The Fate of the Strawberry Roan," continued the stories of the wild stallion challenging the riding skills of local cowhands. Further, Tin Pan Alley songwriters Fred Howard and Nat Vincent modified Fletcher's original ballad by adding a twenty-measure chorus in 1932. It was this rendition that appeared in the *Strawberry Roan* films starring Ken Maynard in 1933 and Gene Autry in 1948, where the themes of masculine anxiety illustrated in the song shaped the plots of these westerns.

Fletcher himself wrote three distinct songs in the 1930s and early 1940s that embellished upon the tale of the original. "The Ridge-Running Roan" continues the story of the protagonist's failure in taming the wild stallion; and "The Bad Brahma Bull" simply extends the narrative to a wild bull refusing to be ridden at a rodeo. Fletcher's following song, "The Castration of the Strawberry Roan," however, realizes


A
E7
A
I was hang-ing round town just spend-ing my time, out of a job and not mak-ing a dime, when a
5
D
E7
A
fel-low steps up and he says, 'I sup-pose that you're a bronc rid-er from the looks of your clothes'.

Example 11. "The Strawberry Roan" (1915), by Curly Fletcher, Fred Howard, Nathaniel H. Vincent. Copyright© 1931 by Southern Music Publishing Col, Inc. for the USA only. Copyright renewed. Used by permission. Recorded by the Arizona Wranglers. Originally released as a special limited edition Christmas record, Merry Xmas, Unnumbered, 1931. Transposed from C major to A major for the ease of comparison.

explicitly the theme of emasculation in a musical setting that includes the twenty-measure chorus of the Tin Pan Alley rendition of "The Strawberry Roan."[124] In this version, a penniless cowboy accepts an offer of employment from a rancher who owns the infamous Strawberry Roan and his progeny, proving to be just as difficult to ride as their sire. The rancher retaliates by convincing the cowhand to help him castrate the stallion. But during the cowboy's attempts, he suddenly hears "blood-curdling squalls" and discerns those cries are coming not from the horse but from the rancher: "The Strawberry Roan had the boss by the balls." The cowboy concludes, "The boss's voice changed, and I knew we was beat."

Borrowing from a song riddled with images of masculine impotency to emphasize the prowess of the cowgirl, Montana magnifies the gender strife and anxieties of the 1930s. The cowgirl's desires to upstage the cowboy realized society's fears—capable women usurping men's cultural authority.[125] Appearing as a swaggering broncobuster, the cowgirl is confident in not suffering the cowboy's humiliating fate of failing to break the wild stallion. Indeed, Montana even declares her disregard for men in the refrain of the fourth verse: "I am a man-hating lassie, a she buckaroo." By the end of the song, however, Montana entertains the possibility of giving up her life as a cowgirl for domesticity. She will lasso a "cowpoke who has never been thrown," someone with skills equal to her own deftness in horsemanship. Once she finds that particular man, she'll "hog-tie him tight 'til he swears he'll be true." Afterward, Montana will "throw 'way my chaps and get dressed instead," "learn to make biscuits and maybe cornbread," "live in town," and "then good-bye to Patsy, the she buckaroo." Thus, in a romantic union where Montana finds a suitable husband, the independent cowgirl will relinquish her

"man-hating" ways of roping and riding wild stallions to remain in the private sphere, leaving the "Wild West" to the men.

If this song is meant to be an autobiographical account of Patsy Montana, then the conclusion appears ironic in how it differs from her professional and personal life. Montana did not end her singing cowgirl career even after she married Paul Rose in 1935. Though she "lived in town" (as stated in the song) with her husband and daughters, the singing cowgirl continued to perform on WLS and wrote and recorded songs about the autonomous western heroine. Thus, this last section of "The She Buckaroo," where the cowgirl ponders a domestic life, seems to be a cursory nod of sorts to conventionality. With the majority of the strophic song shaping the cowgirl into an experienced wrangler, the lyrical narrative's abrupt switch to the protagonist's consideration of marriage leaves the listener wondering whether the "she buckaroo" could find contentment as a wife or mother. The song's conclusion may imply that as long as the cowgirl gestures to gender norms, she is free to pursue the symbolic promises of the western frontier.

Singing Cowgirls and the Romance of the West

Montana was not the only singing cowgirl to depict an independent model of femininity during the gender anxieties that marked the Depression era. In the 1938 film *The Singing Cowgirl*, Dorothy Page played the role of the cowgirl in a typical populist narrative, battling the elite who threatened to exploit a local farming community.[126] From the stage of the *National Barn Dance*, the Girls of the Golden West, Millie and Dolly Good, emerged as a prominent cowgirl act.[127] Though the duet did not specialize in depicting the West from a distinctly female perspective, as did Montana, they did sing a few songs promoting the cowgirl's subjectivity. For instance, the duet recorded "I Want to Be a Real Cowboy Girl" in 1935, the same year that Montana had recorded her signature song. But unlike Montana's invigorating performance in "I Want to Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart," the Girls of the Golden West portrayed the cowgirl's deep desire for the freedoms of the frontier with sentimental expressions: lilting vocal harmonies accompanied by the quiet strumming of the guitar.

Providing the effect of an intimate musical setting, the duet borrows a musical phrase from one of the most popular nostalgic songs of the 1930s, Autry's "That Silver-Haired Daddy of Mine." In the chorus, the Girls of the Golden West sing the lyrics "And know how it feels to wear spurs on my heels then strut about in my chaps" to the music of Autry's bridge: "If I could erase those lines from your face and

bring back the gold to your hair" (ex. 1). Linking their performance identities to the music of the singing cowboy, the duet depicts the cowgirl's longing to play the part of the cowboy, to dress and behave in a manner that resembles the western hero: "to tote a six-shooter too, wear a belt that is four inches wide, then ride like the deuce on a buckskin cayuse." Rather than yearning for the cultural authority of the virile western hero, the cowgirl duet negotiates an image of independence with music that invokes nineteenth-century sentimentality. The duet hence demonstrates the fluidity of gender in the 1930s by adopting the music of one of the most preeminent cowboys of the era to suggest the heartfelt desires of the western heroine.

Just as Montana provided models of femininity that embodied the bucolic fantasies of the American West, the Girls of the Golden West suggested that women could acquire certain cultural freedoms without straying too far from gender norms. For many women, though, shouldering the economic burdens of their families did not entail any sense of freedom or romance but rather drudgery and grave concern. Society often blamed women for the massive unemployment of men, even though women entered an increasingly stratified job market of "feminized" service positions. While urban women worked as office clerks or waitresses, midwestern farmwives and (displaced) southern rural women labored in the fields harvesting crops next to their husbands. Besides sharing the breadwinning role, women's responsibilities in the home increased as well. Since it was usually women (80 percent) who managed the household budget, wives and mothers were the ones who planned and schemed to stretch the family's earnings during the Depression by growing fresh vegetables, shopping strategically, baking everything from scratch, and sewing clothes.[128] The singing cowgirl could offer not only an escape from the material concerns that plagued most women but also offer hope in meeting the era's economic and social challenges. As in her 1935 publicity photo (fig. 3), Montana, armed with guns, appears capable of warding off any dangers of frontier life with her performance identity and femininity still intact as a "cowboy's sweetheart."

Conclusion

As the musical image of the singing cowgirl intertwined with the cowboy's in films, recordings, and radio broadcasts, Gene Autry and Patsy Montana emerged as prominent figures whose music simultaneously voiced and soothed the gender concerns that characterized the era. In the midst of the "masculine crisis," Autry's genteel western

persona, initially introduced through the intimate medium of radio, embodied the tensions that surrounded masculinity. Instead of simply recalling the heroic stance of the cowboy, Autry's musical imagery shaped the singing cowboy into a sentimental figure who underscored the vulnerability of men in the 1930s. More than this, his nostalgic expressions, which relied on the idioms of popular music, shaped the West into a site of longing and escape, an enclave of limitless opportunities. While Autry crooned about riding under the western skies, Montana yodeled about cowgirls roaming the open prairies, the "masculinized" West. Her folk-like numbers and more stylized settings relied upon the musical codes of cowboy music, legitimizing her persona as a singing cowgirl. But she mediated her self-directed persona with the ideals of romantic love couched in the pastoral. With her depictions of the open range, her listeners found solace in a western heroine able to fend off the material and social uncertainties of the time by adopting the stance of the cowboy while cloaked in the ideals of femininity. In essence, the singing cowboy and cowgirl offered the delicate solution of expanding the norms of gender in the mythologized West—where anything is possible.

Notes

Stephanie Vander Wel is an assistant professor for musicology at the University at Buffalo, where she teaches courses Music and Gender, American Music, Popular Music, and Twentieth-Century Experimental Music. She is a contributing author to *The Grove Dictionary of American Music*, second edition, and is working on a book that considers women, musical style, and commerce in country music. E-mail: slv5@buffalo.edu.
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1. As the historian Don Cusic points out, "The roots of the singing cowboys go back to WLS and the *National Barn Dance* in Chicago in the early 1930s." Cusic, "Cowboys in Chicago," in *The Hayloft Gang: The Story of the National Barn Dance*, ed. Chad Berry (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 169.

2. Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (New York: Free Press, 1996), 192.

3. Michael Denning, *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of the American Culture in the Twentieth Century* (London and New York: Verso, 1996), 30.

4. For a history of women's employment during the Great Depression, see Louis Scharf, *To Work and To Wed: Female Employment, Feminism, and the Great Depression* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1980), 107; and Ruth Milkman, "Women's Work and Economic Crisis: Some Lessons of the Great Depression," *Review of Radical Political Economics* 8 (April 1976): 71–97.

5. Kristine McCusker, "Will There Be Any Yodelers in Heaven?," in *Lonesome Cowgirls and Honky-Tonk Angels: The Women of Barn Dance Radio* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 68–81, focuses on the radio career of the Girls of the Golden West.

6. Richard Peterson, *Creating Country Music: Fabricating Authenticity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 81–87.

7. Bill Malone, *Singing Cowboys and Musical Mountaineers: Southern Cultures and the Roots of Country Music* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1993), 91.

8. Peter Stanfield, *Horse Operas: The Strange History of 1930s Singing Cowboy* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 3.

9. Richard Peterson, in *Creating Country Music*, finds that "cowboy songs had little impact on the development of commercial music" (83).

10. For a history of WLS and the *National Barn Dance*, see James F. Evans, *Prairie Farmer and WLS* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1969); and Chad Berry, ed., *The Hayloft Gang: The Story of the National Barn Dance*.

11. Patsy Montana and the Prairie Ramblers often appeared on WLS's early morning show *Smile-A-While*. *WLS Family Album*, 1930, 18; and *WLS Family Album*, 1938, 14–15.

12. *WLS Family Album*, 1930, 18.

13. For further details about barn dance radio, see Charles Wolfe, *A Good-Natured Riot: The Birth of the Grand Ole Opry* (Nashville: Country Music Foundation Press and Vanderbilt University Press, 1999); and Pamela Fox, *Natural Acts: Gender, Race, and Rusticity in Country Music* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009).

14. Paul Tyler, "The Rise of Rural Rhythm," in Berry, *The Hayloft Gang*, 35.

15. *WLS Family Album*, 1935, 35; and *WLS Family Album*, 1937, 45.

16. For a discussion of the various ways, a shared ethnic Germany identity materialized in the Midwest, see Sonya Salamon, *Prairie Patrimony: Family, Farming and Community in the Midwest* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 17–33.

17. Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919–1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), provides a detailed historical account of the different ethnic working-class communities in Chicago before the Depression (11–52) and their relationship to the emerging radio industry in Chicago (133–37).

18. *WLS Family Album*, 1936, 14; *WLS Family Album*, 1933, 17.

19. For historical accounts of white southern migration to the Midwest, see Chad Berry, *Southern Migrants, Northern Exiles* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000); and James Gregory, *The Southern Diaspora: How the Great Migrations of Black and White Southerners Transformed America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

20. In the 1930s, over five thousand southerners worked in the fields of the Midwest. Berry, *Southern Migrants, Northern Exiles*, 20.

21. Vivien Marie Palmer, *Social Backgrounds of Chicago's Local Communities* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 1929), 33.

22. *WLS Family Album*, 1930, 17.

23. Though the *National Barn Dance* was initially the most prominent barn dance, WLS was not the first to air such a program. In 1923, Forth Worth's WBAP featured a variety show originating from the format of vaudeville. Soon afterward, WSB in Atlanta and KDKA in Pittsburgh had also started airing country shows at the same time as that of WLS.

24. William Barlow, *"Looking Up at Down": The Emergence of Blues Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), 311.

25. Tyler, "The Rise of Rural Rhythm," 36.

26. *Souvenir WLS Program*, 1939, 3.

27. Michael T. Bertrand, "Race and Rural Identity," in Berry, *The Hayloft Gang*, 135.

28. David Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929–1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 192.

29. Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear*, 197.

30. Cohen, *Making a New Deal*, 243.

31. Cohen, *Making a New Deal*, 213–49.

32. Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear*, 87.

33. Cohen, *Making a New Deal*, explains that many unemployed Mexicans faced repatriation back to Mexico (242).

34. There is a lack of data on how many former southerners left midwestern cities except for a special household census that was conducted in Flint, Michigan, in 1934. The city lost 35 percent of its white population and 18.9 percent of its black population during the years 1930 and 1934. See Gregory, *The Southern Diaspora*, 29.

35. Berry, *Southern Migrant, Northern Exiles*, 60–61.

36. Cohen, *Making a New Deal*, 246.

37. Susan Ware, Holding Their Own: American Women in the 1930s (Boston, MA: Twayne Publishers, 1982), 26.

38. Cohen, *Making a New Deal*, 247.

39. Ware, *Holding Their Own*, 27.

40. Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988), 51.

41. May, *Homeward Bound*, 40.

42. *WLS Family Album*, 1930, front cover.

43. Kristine McCusker, "Patriarchy and the Great Depression," in Berry, *The Hayloft Gang*, 153–67.

44. *WLS Family Album*, 1937, 47; *WLS Family Album*, 1941, 40.

45. *WLS Family Album*, 1941, 40.

46. Pamela Fox, *Natural Acts: Gender, Race, and Rusticity in Country Music*, 17.

47. *WLS Family Album*, 1932, 41; and *WLS Family Album*, 1935, 19.

48. James Gregory, *American Exodus: The Dust Bowl Migration and Okie Culture in California* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 106.

49. For how the economic downfall of the Depression affected the coal industry in southern Appalachia, see Crandall A. Shifflett, *Coal Towns: Life, Work, and Culture in Company Towns of Southern Appalachia, 1880–1960* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991), 200–2.

50. Berry, *Southern Migrants, Northern Exiles*, 41.

51. Betty L. Nies, "Defending Jeeter: Conservative Arguments against Eugenics in the Depression-Era South," in *Popular Eugenics: National Efficiency and American Mass Culture in the 1930s*, eds. Susan Currell and Christina Cogdell (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2006), 122.

52. President Roosevelt's New Deal relief measure of offering cash subsidies to those who agreed to stop farming also caused landlords to evict their tenant farmers in a region dominated by tenancy. See Gregory, *American Exodus*, 11.

53. Malone, *Singing Cowboys and Musical Mountaineers*, 90.

54. Peterson, *Creating Country Music*, 81.

55. Anthony Harkins, *Hillbilly: A Cultural History of an American Icon* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 95.

56. It is not clear whether Autry had written the songs or acquired the copyright from the original songwriters for "Do Right Daddy," "Birmingham Daddy," and "Jailhouse Blues."

57. Gene Autry, *That Silver-Haired Daddy of Mine*, BCD 15944 IL, 2005, 9-CD set. "Do Right Daddy Blues" by Bill Nettles. Copyright © 1952 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. Used by Permission.

58. Bill Malone, in *Don't Get above Your Raisin': Country Music and the Southern Working Class* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2002), explains that many blues songs in country music appropriated the music making of African Americans (128).

59. Additional examples of Autry's use of sexualized language in his blues songs are: "Bear Cat Papa Blues" (1931) and "High-Steppin' Mama Blues" (1931).

60. Lee Glazer and Susan Key, "Carry Me Back: Nostalgia for the Old South in Nineteenth-Century Popular Culture," *Journal of American Studies* 30 (1996): 1–24.

61. For further details about Autry's initial association with ARC, Sears, Roebuck, and WLS, see Don Cusic, *Gene Autry: His Life and Career* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2007), 173; and Holly George-Warren, *Public Cowboy No. 1: The Life and Times of Gene Autry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 75.

62. As quoted in George-Warren, *Public Cowboy No. 1*, 111.

63. Pamela Grundy, "'We Always Tried to Be Good People': Respectability, Crazy Water Crystals, and Hillbilly Music on the Air, 1933–1935," *Journal of American History* 81 (March 1955): 1591–620.

64. *WLS Family Album*, 1933, 33.

65. David M. Lugowski, "Queering the (New) Deal: Lesbian and Gay Representation and the Depression-Era Cultural Politics of Hollywood's Production Code," *Cinema Journal* 38 (Winter 1999): 4.

66. Evans, *Prairie Farmer and WLS*, 187. Conqueror Records was an American Record Company budget label that Sears, Roebuck, and Co. distributed.

67. "Anne and Sue Bring Tower Topics," *WLS Family Album*, 1931, 40.

68. *WLS Family Album*, 1931, 40.

69. Gene Autry, "3 Pals," *Country Song Roundup*, June 1950, 15.

70. Gene Autry, *Gene Autry's Sensational Collection of Famous Original Cowboy Songs and Mountain Ballads* (Chicago, IL: M. M. Cole, 1932).

71. Stanfield, *Horse Opera*, 56–57.

72. Charles Hamm, *Yesterdays: Popular Song in America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1979), 214.

73. Benjamin Filene, *Romancing the Folk: Public Memory and American Roots Music* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 32.

74. Stanfield, *Horse Opera*, 50.

75. John Lomax, *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* (New York: Macmillan, 1938), 44.

76. Later in 1933, Autry also recorded "There's an Empty Cot in the Bunkhouse Tonight," a song comparable to "Cowboy's Heaven" in theme, form, and melodic and harmonic writing.

77. Frankie Marvin may have been acquainted with Carl T. Sprague's 1926 recording "The Cowboy's Dream," which is in a similar AABA form.

78. Gene Autry, *Rhymes of the Range* (Evanston, IL: Frontier Publishers, 1933).

79. For a discussion of how John Ford incorporated folk music into his western films to point to an Anglo-Saxon or Anglo-Celtic past, see Kathryn Kalinak, *How the West Was Sung: Music in the Westerns of John Ford* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2007), 49–75.

80. Van Alstyne and Williams were both from the Midwest and performed in vaudeville before moving to New York and working as songwriters. Billy Murray recorded their song "Cheyenne" in 1906 for the Victor Talking Machine Company. See Jim Bob Tinsely, *For a Cowboy Has to Sing: A Collection of Sixty Romantic Cowboy and Western Songs* (Orlando: University of Central Florida Press, 1991).

81. Hamm, *Yesterdays*, 379. For further details of how Tin Pan Alley included the sensibilities of an urban white middle-class audience, see Ulf Lindberg, "Popular Modernism? The 'Urban' Style of Interwar Tin Pan Alley," *Popular Music* 22 (October 2003): 283–98.

82. Hamm, *Yesterdays*, 334–35.

83. H. Wiley Hitchcock and Kyle Gann, *Music in the United States: A Historical Introduction* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000), 252. For a discussion about the musical differences and racial significance of "sweet" jazz and "hot" jazz, see Andrew Berish, "'I Dream of Her and Avalon': 1930s Sweet Jazz, Race and Nostalgia at the Casino Ballroom, *Journal of the Society for American Music* 2 (2008): 531–67.

84. Jonathan Greenberg, "Singing Up Close: Voice, Language and Race In American Popular Music, 1925–1935" (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2008), 102.

85. Allison McCracken, "'God's Gift to Us Girls': Crooning, Gender, and the Re-Creation of American Popular Song, 1928–1933" *American Music* 4 (Winter 1999): 365–95.

86. Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 203.

87. Greenberg, "Singing Up Close," 135.

88. Greenberg, "Singing Up Close," 105.

89. McCracken, "'God's Gift to Us Girls,'" 365–85.

90. Tyler, "The Rise of Rural Rhythms," 35.

91. Stanfield, *Horse Opera*, 83–84, points out that the owner of Republic Studios, Herbert J. Yates, was also the head of the American Record Corporation (ARC) with whom Autry had a recording contract. Consequently, it was in Yates's best interest to promote Autry's film career as an extension of his recording success.

92. *Tumbling Tumbleweeds*, dir. Joseph Kane, Republic Pictures Corporation, 1935.

93. Kalinak, in *How the West Was Sung*, argues that John Ford's western films created plots where male leads sang without compromising their masculinity. Rather, the inclusion of music making—singing and dancing—redefined the narrow parameters of masculinity (122–57).

94. Stanfield, in *Horse Opera*, explains that it wasn't until the early 1940s when Autry enlisted in the army that Roy Rogers was able to rival Autry's dominance in film (88).

95. Tex Ritter, "The Story of Tex Ritter," in *Tex Ritter: Mountain Ballads and Cowboy Songs* (Chicago, IL: M. M. Cole, 1941).

96. Tex Ritter, "A-Ridin' Old Paint," *Back in the Saddle Again*, New World Records 80314-2, 1983, 2-CD set.

97. Tex Ritter, "Get Along Little Doggies," "Take Me Back to My Boots and Saddle," *An Introduction to Tex Ritter: Sing Cowboy Sing*, Proper Records 2049, 2004, CD.

98. See Stanfield, *Horse Opera*, 89–92, for more details of how Ritter's radio career affected his film career.

99. Sons of the Pioneers, "Tumbling Tumbleweeds," *Classic Country Music: A Smithsonian Collection*, vol. 1, Smithsonian Collection of Recordings RD 042-1, 1990, CD.

100. Originally from Texas, Stuart Hamblen moved to the West Coast in 1930 to participate in the radio industry's newfound focus on country music in California. In 1931, he started hosting his own broadcasts of country music, facilitating the careers of other performers and writing some of the most memorable western-themed music: "My Brown-Eyed Texas Rose" and "Texas Plains."

101. Patsy Montana, interview with John Rumble, 9 June 1984, transcript OHC195-LC, Country Music Foundation Oral History Project (Nashville, TN: Country Music Hall of Fame Library), 6–18; and *Stand By!*, 30 November 1935, 11.

102. Patsy Montana with Jane Frost, *Patsy Montana: The Cowboy's Sweetheart* (Jefferson, NC, and London: McFarland, 2002), 49.

103. *WLS Family Album*, 1936, 22.

104. Montana, interview with John Rumble, 6.

105. Montana started to appear with the Prairie Ramblers on WLS's program *Smile-A-While* in 1933. The sponsors, Kolor Back, moved Montana and the Prairie Ramblers to New York's WOR for part of 1935, before returning to WLS. While in New York, Montana and the Prairie Ramblers recorded "I Want to Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart." See Montana, *Patsy Montana*, 71.

106. The bandleader Adolph Hofner popularized polkas and waltzes in western-swing numbers.

107. Montana, interview with John Rumble, 65.

108. Montana, interview with John Rumble, 79.

109. For more detailed accounts about the physiological demands of yodeling for male singers, see Bart Plantenga, *Yodel-Ay-Ee-Oooo: The Secret History of Yodeling Around the World* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 12–15; and Timothy Wise, "Yodel Species: A Typology of Falsetto Effects in Popular Music Vocal Styles," *Radical Musicology* 2 (2007): 57 pars, 17 January 2008, http://www.radical-musicology.org.uk.

110. Richard Miller, *The Structure of Singing: System and Art in Vocal Technique* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1986), 132.

111. Timothy Wise, in "Yodel Species," claims that the vocal break for women occurs between the head register and whistle register.

112. *WLS Family Album*, 1937, 40.

113. *WLS Family Album*, 1939, 30.

114. See Timothy Wise, "Jimmie Rodgers and the Semiosis of the Hillbilly Yodel," *Musical Quarterly* 93 (2010): 6–44, for a discussion of the melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic patterns in Rodgers's yodels, which influenced the yodeling of country musicians.

115. For further discussions of Jimmie Rodgers and the yodel, see Jocelyn Neal, *The Songs of Jimmie Rodgers: A Legacy in Country Music* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2009), 19–25.

116. See Montana, *Patsy Montana*, 200, for her praise of Elton Britt's yodeling.

117. Elton Britt, "Chime Bells," *The RCA Years*, BMG Collectors' Choice Music CCM-031-2, 1997.

118. Rosalie Allen, *The Versatile Rosalie Allen*, JASMCD 3598/9, 2010.

119. Elton Britt, *Country Music's Yodeling Cowboy Crooner*, vol. 1, JASMCD 3565, 2005.

120. *Stand By!*, 11 July 1936, 12. Other acts and soloists also voted most popular were: Girls of the Golden West, Ramblin' Red Foley, Hoosier Hot Shots, Pat Buttram, Cumberland Ridge Runners and Linda Parker, Uncle Erza, Arkie, Hoosier Sod Busters, Maple City Four, and Otto and the Novelodeons.

121. *Colorado Sunset*, dir. George Sherman, Republic Pictures, 1939.

122. For a historical account of the publication and performances of "The Strawberry Roan," see John I. White, *Git Along Little Dogies: Songs and Songmakers of the American West* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 137–47.

123. For the different parodies of the original song, see Austin E. Fife, "The Strawberry Roan and His Progeny," *JEMF Quarterly* 8 (1972): 149–65.

124. Using the Tin Pan Alley setting for his "Castration" song, Fletcher may have been retaliating against the songwriters Howard and Vincent for plagiarizing his ballad in their Tin Pan Alley version. See Logsdon, *"The Whorehouse Bells Were Ringing" And Other Songs Cowboys Sing: Music in American Life* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 87.

125. Ware, *Holding Their Own*, 27–35.

126. *The Singing Cowgirl*, dir. Samuel Diege, Grand National Pictures, 1938.

127. For further details about the radio career of the Girls of the Golden West, see McCusker, *Lonesome Cowgirls and Honky-Tonk Angels*, 68–81.

128. May, *Homeward Bound*, 51.

General Meredith Read and Claude Debussy's Marche Écossaise

Marie Rolf

The figure of General Meredith Read appears once and only once in Debussy's biographies, named as the dedicatee of the composer's *Marche écossaise*. Who was this mysterious general and what was the nature of Debussy's relationship with him? Before 1890, when the *Marche écossaise* was composed, Debussy had typically dedicated his works to special performers (such as Madame Vasnier or Madame Émile Deguingand), teachers (such as Émile Durand or Ernest Guiraud), colleagues (such as Paul Dukas or René Chansarel), or loyal patrons (such as Madame von Meck or Étienne Dupin), all of whom he knew well. How does General Meredith Read fit into this context? What were the unique circumstances behind Debussy's one-off composition? These questions will be addressed in the following study, which is based on a careful examination of over eighty-five boxes of Read's substantial personal archives.

"Le Général Meredith Read," Diplomat in Paris

According to a legend, dutifully perpetuated by many of Debussy's biographers, Meredith Read was a "Scottish general" who spoke no French; thus, his meeting with Debussy allegedly required the translation skills of Alphonse Allais at the nearby Bar Austin.[1] Meredith Read was not in fact Scottish but American, a "general" in title but someone who had never seen military combat, and a career diplomat who was completely fluent in French. It is doubly surprising that such fundamental errors about Read's background were accepted without question, given the massive amount of primary source material that is available on him and his illustrious family.[2]

General Meredith Read's full name was John Meredith Read Jr., and although he was born in 1837 in Philadelphia, he lived nearly half of his life abroad, though not in Scotland. (The Scottish connection will emerge in due course.) Serving in the newly created position of U.S.

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consul general to France and Algeria, Read was stationed in Paris from 1869 to 1873; he had been appointed to this post as a political favor by President Ulysses S. Grant, whose campaign for the U.S. presidency in 1868 Read had supported.[3] Diplomacy aside, Read's personal ties to Paris were strong. He and his wife had become very active and enthusiastic participants in Parisian social and cultural life.[4] His youngest child, Marie Delphine, was born there, and three of his four children married French nobility (two Read siblings married two siblings from the Foras family). After serving as the first resident minister to Greece from 1874 to 1876,[5] a position that was reduced in status to *chargé d'affaires* from 1876 to 1878, he continued his work in Greece until late in 1879, even after funding for the Greek diplomatic legation was terminated by the U.S. Congress in 1878.[6] Following his official retirement, Read chose to move back to Paris in 1880, living in the fashionable 8ème arrondissement, at 128, rue la Boëtie, until his death on 27 December 1896.

After 16 April 1869, when the U.S. Senate confirmed the new office of the consul general in France and Algeria,[7] Read began the task of organizing the service, creating thirty-five consular officers within his jurisdiction. Read's honeymoon period on the job had scarcely passed when he was compelled to deal with the chaos of the Franco-Prussian War and the first siege of Paris, from September 1870 until the end of January 1871, followed by the second siege and the Commune, from March until May 1871, a dreadful period during which so many Parisians died and the City of Light sustained so much damage. His diplomatic skills were stretched by these cataclysmic events; in addition to his assigned duties, he took it upon himself to serve as the consul general of Germany in order to avert the possibility of renewed hostilities with the presence of German consular officials in France. From 1870 to 1872, Read not only protected French citizens (to the point of being present with the ambulance corps, supported by Arsène Houssaye, during some actual battles in Paris)[8] and valuables—for example, he personally stored "for nearly a year large quantities of American property, and was also the guardian of the precious relics and heirlooms of the descendants of General LaFayette"[9]—but he also protected German subjects and interests during that difficult period.

In spite of Read's significant personal sacrifice during the first siege of Paris, living there alone with only rare reports regarding the safety of his family in Normandy,[10] experiencing the terror of close "cannonading,"[11] and suffering from an increasingly debilitating illness caused by questionable meat sources (supposedly horse meat, but by mid-December, a shop that sold cat, dog, and rat opened up just across the street from his office),[12] his strong sense of duty and religious faith

sustained him.[13] It was not until his doctor ordered him to leave Paris for medical reasons that he acquiesced, making his way through heavy bombardment in early January 1871 to reunite with his family in England. By March, they were back in Paris, where he and his wife experienced together the "sickening" events of the Commune such as the fall of the Column in the Place Vendôme and the utter destruction of the home of Adolphe Thiers, then head of state.[14] Read continued to serve loyally, even with his strong personal aristocratic leanings and lack of identification with the Communards.

Once the immediate horrors of the Commune were over, in 1872, General de Cissy, the French Minister of War, asked Read to preside over "a commission to examine into [*sic*] the expediency of extending the study of the English language in the French Army."[15] In a letter to Earl Stanhope, Read reported in great detail his exchange with General de Cissy, quoting at length from the minister's flowery acknowledgment of his work, and also asking Stanhope to suggest some possible British hosts for a French lieutenant who wanted to improve his English while on a three-month leave.[16] In his diplomatic role, Read often served as facilitator for others. His personal papers bear witness to his multilingual skills, communicating in both French and English (not to mention some excerpts in Greek).[17] In an intriguing diary entry written during the first siege of Paris, Read confessed: "Providence has seen fit to endow me with a facility for acquiring languages, so that in six weeks I can pick enough of a new language to speak and use it in all practical matters."[18]

Scholar, Writer, Collector, Art Enthusiast

Read described himself as a "diplomatist" but also as a "historical, biographical, and military author."[19] Indeed, he was a prolific and energetic scholar and writer who spent his final years in Paris editing his sizable collection of historical manuscripts relating to Greece, France, America, and Switzerland, and preparing his memoirs and personal papers for publication. A partial list of his publications, shown in figure 1, reveals both a steady output and a diversity of topics. His early work on Henry Hudson brought him some visibility as an author and helped to establish his reputation as a serious historian. In addition, he wrote and subsequently published numerous speeches on important members of his own family, among other historical figures; Read's endless fascination with genealogy clearly consumed a great deal of his time and resources.[20] His magnum opus, *Historic Studies in Vaud, Berne and Savoy, from Roman Times to Voltaire, Rousseau and Gibbon*, was published posthumously in 1897 (London: Chatto & Windus) in two enormous volumes.

Much of what Read wrote about, especially in his final tome, was drawn from his lifelong research and the rare materials he had amassed for his personal library.[21] This collection included the large family Bible that belonged to Edward Gibbon, author of *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (6 vols., 1766–88); letters by Voltaire, whose works and ideas influenced many behind the French and American revolutions; amorous, "worm-eaten letters" involving Catherine de Medici, Queen Elizabeth, and the Duc d'Alençon;[22] and sixteen boxes of the papers of Robert Morris, the American patriot who personally financed the Revolutionary War and, after signing the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and the U.S. Constitution, served as the new country's first senator (from the state of Pennsylvania).[23] Read's collection of rare works regarding

The Relation of the Soil to Plants and Animals (New York State Agricultural Society, 1860)

"Military Reports and Suggestions" (1861, 1862, 1863, 1864)

A Historical Inquiry Concerning Henry Hudson, His Friends, Relatives, and Early Life: His Connection with the Muscovy Company, and Discovery of Delaware Bay (Albany, 1866; Edinburgh: Clarendon Historical Society, 1882)

"Charles Read of Philadelphia" (*Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*)

"The Old Slate-Roof House"* (*Lippincott's Magazine*, 1868)

"The Old Philadelphia Library" (*Atlantic Monthly*, 1868)

"Charles Reade at Home" (*Harper's Weekly*, 1873)

"A Letter in Greek and English addressed to the Archaeological Society of Greece upon the death of the Fifth Earl of Stanhope, the historian of the reign of Queen Anne" (1875)

"The Spartans of Paris" (*The Magazine of American History*, 1891)

"The English Ancestry of Washington" (*Athenaeum*, 1894)

"Criticism on M. Paul Bourget's *Outre-Mer*" (*Le Figaro*, 1894; New York *Herald*, Paris and New York [*Tribune*, 21 April and 9 June] editions, 1895).

"Francis Aquila Stout: A Study"† (New York, 1894)

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* The "Old Slate-Roof House" was in reality the home of Samuel Carpenter, a friend of William Penn and the grandfather of Martha Carpenter, who married Reese Meredith, the first man from the Meredith side of the family to emigrate to America. See the abridged genealogical chart in Figure 3.

† Francis Aquila Stout was Read's son-in-law. Much older than his wife, Stout died in 1892, leaving Read's daughter Emily a widow at age 29.

Figure 1. Partial list of books and articles by John Meredith Read Jr. published during his lifetime.

medieval and modern Greece, amassed by 1878, was dubbed "the best in existence" by the former librarian of the National Library at Athens, who catalogued the collection for its owner.[24]

Read actively sought and deeply valued the company of other writers. He fraternized with many novelists, poets, critics, and editors through his membership in the Spartiates academy in Paris—individuals such as Théodore de Banville, Jules Claretie, François Coppée, Alexandre Dumas *fils*, Théophile Gautier, Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, José-Maria de Hérédia, and Paul de Saint-Victor, to name a few. He especially admired the work of Théophile Gautier,[25] and wrote of the "grace and delicacy" of Banville's poetry;[26] coincidentally, Claude Debussy set the poetry of both of these men during the early 1880s, during the same period when Read was reentering Parisian life. While still in Athens, Read had hosted visits on 14 and 16 April 1877 by none other than Oscar Wilde, who was at the time a student in Magdalen College at Oxford and known to Read merely as the son of his acquaintance, the late Sir William Wilde, a surgeon and former vice president of the Royal Irish Academy.[27]

Read's cultural propensities extended to fine art.[28] He "followed with lively interest" the crating of the Venus de Milo in the Louvre, and her storage at the Préfecture de Police during the Commune.[29] Although the Venus had been housed at the Louvre since the 1820s, a heated discussion arose in the 1870s regarding the condition of the statue at the time of her unearthing on the Greek island of Milos.[30] Read diplomatically avoided taking sides in this dispute; rather, he concentrated on extolling her beauty when he wrote of the Venus:

> Henri Heine called her "Notre-Dame-de-Beauté"—recognizing in her the divinity of beauty, whose magnetic power twenty-five hundred years had failed to affect. Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Victor Hugo, Alfred de Musset, Théophile Gautier, and Paul de Saint Victor have sung her praises in all the various keys of their differing genius.[31]

It is perhaps not surprising that Read was keenly interested in historical paintings, as his official residences in France[32] and in Greece would have afforded him the ideal venues for displaying such art. Several works that he himself commissioned are especially noteworthy. He asked Édouard Armand Dumaresq to paint a watercolor, *Un Dîner chez Washington*, in which General and Mrs. Washington, her daughters Elinor and Elizabeth Custis, George Read of Delaware, General Lafayette, and Richard Henry Lee, among others, were portrayed,

drawing on source material from John Meredith Read Jr.'s own books, notes, and engraved portraits of these individuals.[33] William Astor happened to see *Un Dîner chez Washington* in Dumaresq's studio in 1872, a year before it was finally completed, and was so taken with it that he asked Read's permission to have the painter create a copy in oil; permission being granted, Astor paid Dumaresq fifteen thousand francs for the copy.[34] Read commissioned another historical painting from Armand Dumaresq, *The Dinner Club of the Congress of 1775*, depicting Randolph, Lee, Washington, and Benjamin Harrison from Virginia, Samuel Chase of Maryland, Caesar Rodney and George Read of Delaware, and John Alsop of New York. The impetus for this work came from a letter written by Read's great-grandfather (George Read) to his wife, which described daylong meetings of Congress, followed by regular dinners with these same gentlemen at the City Tavern in Philadelphia.[35] Another French military painter who was patronized by Read in 1871, Henry Louis Dupray, portrayed Read himself "crossing the Seine in an open boat during the bombardment of Paris."[36]

Numerous other references to paintings that Read admired, and many of which he himself owned,[37] are scattered among his papers that are now housed at the Historical Society of Delaware, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the New York Public Library, the University of Rochester, and the New York State Library.[38] He had personally contracted with none other than the well-known Albert Bierstadt to illustrate a second edition of his book on Henry Hudson.[39] As well, in a letter of 11 February 1876 to J. Henry Brown of Philadelphia, Read remarked on the portraits of three U.S. presidents—Washington, Jackson, and Lincoln—that had been commissioned by his father and grandfather.[40]

Portraits formed the greatest part of Read's personal art collection. While still a teenager, he had received some precious portraits from his father,[41] and by the time he had set up his law office in Albany in his early twenties, he expressed great satisfaction in surrounding himself with likenesses of his family.[42] He zealously tracked down paintings of family members, had them restored, and paid for copies of them.[43] We know that he personally owned portraits of his great-grandfather George Read and his great-grandmother Gertrude Ross,[44] her half brother John Ross and his wife, Elizabeth Morgan, and their daughter Catherine Ross Gurney.[45] Read also displayed portraits of his grandfather John Read and father, John Meredith Read.[46] In addition to these family pictures, he treasured a large engraving by Goupil that portrayed many of his fellow "Spartan" colleagues[47] as well as a cabinet portrait of fellow member

Henry Houssaye, painted by Henry Louis Dupray.[48] When Read was elected to the Spartiates Academy, to fill a vacancy in the group created by the death of his friend, the Duke de Persigny, he purchased "a charming portrait of a great beauty of the last century, by Largillière," which had been owned by the Duke.[49]

Read's Musical Interests and Associations

Read's musical understanding was apparently less well developed than his knowledge of painting. Although he was exposed to classical music from the time of his youth, his musical experiences as an adult seem to have been linked with social events or the act of collecting. For example, in a letter of 17 June 1877 that described a dinner given by the Duke of Edinburgh on his ship *The Sultan*, Read reported that each dish was accompanied by music—lighter fare by Waldteufel, Gounod, Strauss, Auber, and the like.[50] Similarly, during his trip to London in September 1872, when the diplomat visited his friend Charles Reade, "both instrumental and vocal" music would be performed in the evenings, and his host would typically sing "one or two rare old English ballads."[51] The diplomat's lengthy exchange with William Hunter during spring of that year reveals his persistence in assisting Hunter in his quest for French eighteenth- and nineteenth-century music catalogs.[52]

It seems that Read's musical information often came from his colleagues in the Spartiates group. For example, when he needed to learn more about music publishers in Paris, he turned to Arsène Houssaye, one of the three Spartan founders.[53] He took pleasure in viewing the splendid collection of Irish folksongs owned by his fellow Spartan, Count Nigra.[54] Read met composer Daniel Auber through their mutual membership in the Spartiates Academy,[55] and he clearly showed some interest in opera.[56] We know that he also had some contact with Massenet, with whom he dined on 3 October 1888,[57] and he surely knew about Wagner's operas and philosophies.[58]

We do not know if Read met Massenet prior to the autumn of 1888. However, we do know that the guests for that dinner party in October included Major Rathbone, who at the time was serving in Read's former position as the American consul general to France,[59] and Sibyl Sanderson,[60] the young diva from California who had debuted at The Hague in Massenet's *Manon* in January of that year. In October 1888, Massenet and Sanderson would have been consumed with musical coachings and final tweaks to the score of *Esclarmonde*. Sanderson's star was on the rise; she had just won the Chopin–Rossini

award at the Conservatoire in April 1888,[61] and she was eager to make her mark in the world of opera.[62] Smitten by her stunning beauty as well as the tremendous range of her coloratura soprano voice, Massenet focused his operatic efforts with her musical and dramatic gifts in mind.

Massenet had been teaching at the Conservatoire since 1878, and in that role during the 1880s, he had produced many winners of the Prix de Rome, including Lucien Hillemacher (1880), Georges Marty (1882), Paul Vidal (1883),[63] Xavier Leroux (1885), Augustin Savard (1886), and Gustave Charpentier (1887). By the late 1880s, however, he was so involved with his own compositions, especially the operas,[64] that most of his teaching was covered by assistants.[65] If, perchance, Read had broached the idea of a musical setting of a Scottish tune at that dinner party in October 1888, it is unlikely that Massenet would have had the time to act on it himself. However, it is possible that he could have referred Read to one or more of the recent Prix de Rome winners, including Debussy, who had studied with Ernest Guiraud and had won the Prix de Rome in 1884, as potential composers/arrangers.

Debussy had left Rome for good in March 1887, returning to Paris to begin his life as a freelance composer. The late 1880s proved to be a difficult period for him both financially and artistically, and he would have welcomed any opportunity for a commission. The need to earn his own living and to compose works that would carve out new compositional paths and still appeal to the general public, as opposed to his teachers or peers, weighed heavily on him.[66] He resorted to preparing transcriptions of works by others to secure some income; between 1889 and 1891, Durand published six of these, including Debussy's transcriptions of several works by Saint-Saëns—*Caprice pour piano sur les airs de ballet d'Alceste de Gluck* (for piano, four hands, contracted with Durand on 4 March 1889 and published in May 1891), *Introduction et Rondo capriccioso*, op. 28 (for two pianos, four hands, published 24 June 1889), *2^e^ Symphonie en la mineur*, op. 55 (for two pianos, four hands, published June 1890), and *Airs de ballet d'Étienne Marcel* (for two pianos, four hands, published 1890)—as well as the overture to Wagner's *Der fliegende Holländer* (for two pianos, four hands, published 1889) and Robert Schumann's *Six Études en forme de canon pour piano ou orgue à pedales*, op. 56 (for two pianos, four hands, published 1891).[67] Debussy also relied on friends and supporters like Étienne Dupin for financial loans just to make ends meet.[68] He even lived briefly with Dupin (at 76, boulevard Malesherbes), from October 1890 until February 1891, during the period when he would have been composing the *Marche écossaise* for piano, four hands.[69]

Precisely how Read would have met Debussy remains a matter of conjecture. Other than the possible Massenet connection, pianist René Chansarel[70] or composers Charles Gounod or Ernest Chausson might have given Debussy's name to potential patrons such as Read. Chausson was among the French contingent, which also included Dupin and his guest Debussy, that had traveled to Bayreuth in August 1890, and although his relationship with the young Claude-Achille had its ups and downs, the well-to-do older composer offered both financial and moral support. He himself had studied with Massenet, and, as secretary of the Société nationale de musique, he actively promoted Debussy's works.[71]

It is perhaps even more likely, however, that Read was introduced to Debussy through nonmusicians. One possible connection may have existed through André-Ferdinand Hérold, a poet and the son of a former Prefect of the Seine (and grandson of the composer of the comic opera *Le Pré aux clercs*). Debussy corresponded rather regularly with Hérold while he was living with Dupin during the last three months of 1889, and Hérold took it upon himself to share Debussy's Baudelaire songs with Mallarmé, which led to discussions about a possible collaboration between Debussy and Mallarmé on a production of *L'Après-midi d'un faune*. This project was to include incidental music by Debussy, and was to be produced by Paul Fort at the Théâtre d'Art in February 1891. Though the plans were ultimately aborted, another individual who was extremely supportive of the composer—Prince André Poniatowski—was brought in on the discussions.[72] Poniatowski would go on to try to launch Debussy's career in New York, making contact with orchestra conductors Anton Seidl and Walter Damrosch, and hoping to convince Andrew Carnegie to help him financially. In August 1892, he wrote to Debussy, offering a concert devoted to his works, but unfortunately this project also came to naught.[73]

Another hypothesis is that Read's fellow Spartan, the painter Paul Baudry,[74] could have introduced the diplomat to Claude Debussy, either directly or through the intervention of Henri Vasnier, who had commissioned Baudry to paint a portrait of his wife, Mme Marie Vasnier, on 23 November 1885. Young Debussy had also known Baudry[75] and had served as Mme Vasnier's accompanist for her voice lessons with Mme Moreau-Sainti, and he had already composed a number of songs for her.[76] He spent a great deal of time at the Vasniers' homes, and enjoyed perusing Henri Vasnier's libraries in particular. In addition, Vasnier was keenly interested in Hellenic culture and in archaeology, and, as an active member of the Association des études grecques, the Société d'archéologie française, and the Société des antiquaires de France, he may have met Read, who shared similar interests in Hellenic and

antiquarian activities, and could conceivably have introduced the diplomat to Debussy, whose work as a composer he strongly supported.

The Bonaparte–Popelin connection may have provided yet another link between Read and Debussy. One of Debussy's most intimate friends while he was living at the Villa Médici as a winner of the Prix de Rome was Gustave Popelin. The composer confided in Gustave as well as in his father, Claudius-Marcel, about his liaison with Mme Vasnier, and the two men helped to "cover" for Debussy on his various amorous escapades.[77] Claudius, an enamel painter and poet, was in turn involved with Princesse Mathilde Bonaparte, the first cousin of Napoleon III. Mathilde surrounded herself with artists and writers such as Paul Baudry and the Goncourt brothers, and she was especially close to Théophile Gautier. Through Mathilde, Gautier and her nephew, Count Primoli, met each other. But, as is well known, Primoli also assisted Debussy financially; moreover, he owned a villa in Fiumicino near Rome, which he offered as a haven for Debussy to escape from the close atmosphere of the Villa Médici.[78] As for Read, when he first moved to Paris, he was associating regularly with Napoleon's court.[79] Between that possible social connection and the fact that many of Mathilde's artist friends were fellow Spartans, it is not inconceivable that the diplomat might have been introduced to the composer through one of these individuals.

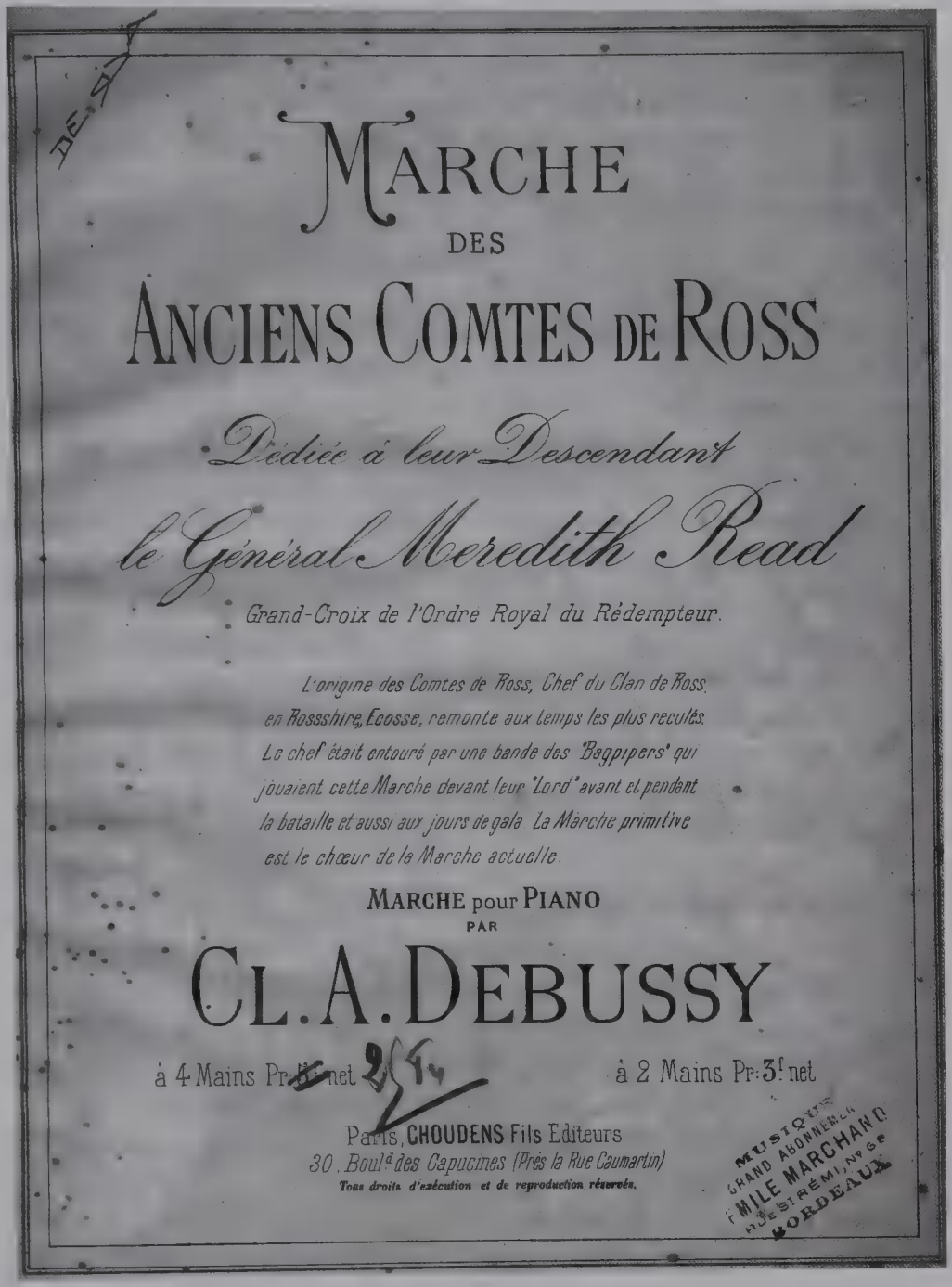
We do not know whether Read was referred to Debussy by any of these people, or whether he met the composer directly or heard his music at any one of a number of *soirées* which he surely would have attended as an ardent and lively participant in Parisian diplomatic social circles.[80] However, we can reasonably speculate about Read's motivations for commissioning the work. First, he had an abiding interest in folk music; scattered among his writings are occasional references to the charm of folksongs.[81] In addition, he valued music that was composed for patriotic purposes. He took particular pride in his relative Colonel Richard Howell's "ode" that was composed for the purpose of welcoming George Washington to Trenton, when he was en route to New York for his inauguration.[82] Thus, we can verify Read's exposure to the concept of preserving and celebrating a cultural identity through folk and patriotic song, whether or not he could actually read music himself.[83]

Read's commission of the *Marche des anciens comtes de Ross* (later known as the *Marche écossaise*) would have fulfilled both of these purposes, and even more. The work was folklike in nature, as it was based on an old Scottish piping tune. And it had nationalistic implications, as Read believed it to be the song adopted by his ancestors from Scotland, the Ross clan. In addition, his commission was no doubt intended to

celebrate the high honor, the Knight of the Royal Order of the Redeemer, which had been bestowed upon him by King George of Greece in November 1881.[84] Debussy's composition may well have been intended to commemorate the tenth anniversary of this award, as his work was published in 1891.[85] The title page (fig. 2) is more elaborate than any other in Debussy's œuvre, and was clearly designed to extol Read, his ancestry, and his knighthood: "Marche / des / Anciens Comtes de Ross / Dédiée à leur Descendant / le Général Meredith Read / Grand-Croix de l'Ordre Royal du Rédempteur" (March of the Ancient Earls of Ross, dedicated to their descendant, General Meredith Read, Knight of the Royal Order of the Redeemer).[86]

Read's Ancestry

Although Debussy's title page of the *Marche* celebrates the Scottish clan of Ross, John Meredith Read Jr.'s ancestors hailed from not only Scotland but Ireland, England, and Wales. Read was justifiably proud of his family heritage.[87] Among his direct descendants were three signers of the Declaration of Independence, and the marriage of his oldest daughter would link him with yet another family whose ancestor was also a signer.[88] Thus, the lives of four influential colonial families—the Rosses, Reads, Merediths/Clymers/Carpenters, and Morrises—were woven together, with John Meredith Read Jr. situated by birth at the hub of this interconnection (fig. 3). The Ross side of the family issued from Rev. George Ross, who moved from Rossshire, Scotland, to New Castle, Delaware, in the early 1700s and was the son of David Ross (the Laird of Balblair and a direct descendant of William, the 6th Earl of Ross)[89] and his wife, Margaret Stronach. The Reads issued from George Read, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence and the son of Colonel John Read, originally of English parentage from Dublin, Ireland, and his wife, Mary Howell, from Wales; John Read moved across the Atlantic first to Maryland, then he helped to found the city of Charleston, and soon made his way to Delaware. Reese Meredith, also from Wales,[90] settled in Philadelphia in 1730; his grandfather Richard Meredith was high sheriff and a justice of the peace in Radnorshire, Wales. The Morris family, into which John Meredith Read Jr.'s daughter Emily married, was originally from England; Richard Morris, who had served as an officer in Oliver Cromwell's army in the seventeenth century, came to New York via Barbados, and founded the estate of Morrisania (now a part of New York City). His son, Governor Lewis Morris, was the first lord of Morrisania, and he married Isabella Graham, who hailed from Scotland.


MARCHE
DES
ANCIENS COMTES DE ROSS
Dédiée à leur Descendant
le Général Meredith Read
Grand-Croix de l'Ordre Royal du Rédempteur.
L'origine des Comtes de Ross, Chef du Clan de Ross, en Rossshire, Ecosse, remonte aux temps les plus reculés. Le chef était entouré par une bande des "Bagpipers" qui jouaient cette Marche devant leur "Lord" avant et pendant la bataille et aussi aux jours de gala. La Marche primitive est le chœur de la Marche actuelle.
MARCHE pour PIANO
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GRAND ABONNEMENT
EMILE MARCHAND
RUE ST RÉMI, N.Ge
BORDEAUX

Figure 2. Title page of first edition, for piano, four hands, published by Choudens in 1891. Reproduced with kind permission of the Sibley Music Library, Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester.

Thus, the ties to Scotland, Ireland, England, and Wales were strong and deep for John Meredith Read Jr.

The genealogical chart in figure 3 is highly abridged in order to reveal the primary connections between John Meredith Read Jr. and his

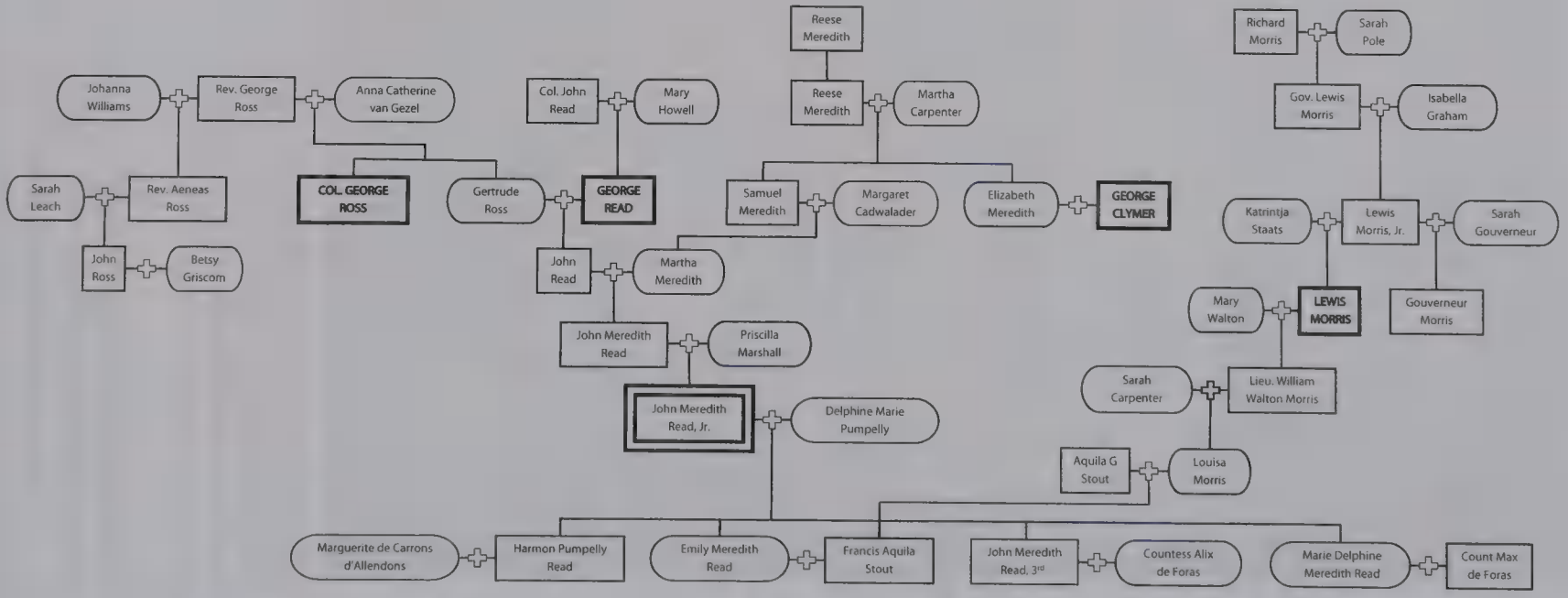


Figure 3. Abridged genealogical chart of the family of John Meredith Read Jr.

ancestors and descendants. Colonial families were typically quite large, and it was common for some of the children to die in infancy. Were the complete families to be listed in this chart, it would be visually difficult to track clearly the family lineage.[91] Listed at the top of the chart are those family members who first came to America from Europe, and the family's signers of the Declaration of Independence are highlighted in boldface. They include George Ross and George Clymer, both of whom represented Pennsylvania, George Read, who represented Delaware, and Lewis Morris, who represented New York at the Second Continental Congress when they signed the Declaration of Independence on 4 July 1776.[92]

The political leadership displayed by these four signers was augmented by other early members of the extended Ross–Read–Meredith–Morris family. Although volumes have been written about these individuals, three brief examples, each from a different side of the family, will suffice to make the point.

(1) Gouverneur Morris, who was the half brother of Lewis Morris, the signer,[93] joined George Read and George Clymer as one of the framers and signers of the U.S. Constitution in 1787. He was in charge of the committee to draft the final copy of the Constitution, and in fact he himself authored large portions of it. Later, in 1791–94, he served as the U.S. Minister to France during the Reign of Terror following the French Revolution.

(2) From the Meredith side of the family, Samuel Meredith served extensive military duty, and as a member of his brother-in-law Colonel John Cadwalader's "Silk Stocking Company" fought in the battles of Trenton, Princeton, Brandywine, and Germantown. In 1778–79, Meredith served as a member of the Pennsylvania Assembly, and in civilian life, he joined his father in the family's profitable mercantile business, which eventually added his brother-in-law George Clymer and became known as "Meredith & Sons." The partnership of Samuel Meredith and George Clymer eventually extended to land speculation in New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, western Virginia, and eastern Kentucky; their influence was substantial. Samuel Meredith's father, Reese Meredith, had known George Washington since 1755 (when Washington was a mere colonel from Virginia), so Samuel's acquaintance with the "Father of Our Country" began in his youth. This family connection, in addition to Samuel's years of loyal service to his country, led ultimately to Washington's decision to appoint Samuel Meredith as the first Treasurer of the United States, in which position he faithfully served from 1789 to 1801; before his retirement, Samuel would

"loan" the government more than $100,000 from his personal resources, a loan that was never repaid.

(3) Returning to the Ross side of the family, the signer George Ross's half brother, Rev. Aeneas Ross,[94] had five children with his wife, Sarah Leach. Among these offspring, who would have been nieces and nephews of the signer George Ross, was one John Ross, whose life was cut short (1752–76) by an explosion of gunpowder on the wharf in Philadelphia. He had "enlisted in the Pennsylvania militia in April 1775, just after the battles of Lexington and Concord."[95] On New Year's Day in 1773, Benjamin Franklin's son William had officiated at the marriage of John Ross to Elizabeth Griscom—better known to North American readers as Betsy Ross. John's uncle George Ross was a member of the committee that in June 1776 asked Betsy to make the first "star-spangled banner."[96] George Washington was also a member of that committee; Betsy had known him previously, and had even "embroidered ruffles for his shirt bosoms and cuffs."[97] Washington himself was apparently very involved in the creation of the initial design, which was tweaked by Betsy. Thus began Betsy's notable and prolonged legacy of sewing flags for the new U.S. government.

The personal lives and professional careers of John Meredith Read Jr.'s grandfather, John Read (born 17 July 1769 in New Castle, Delaware, and died on 13 July 1854 in Trenton, New Jersey), and his father, John Meredith Read (born 21 July 1797 in Philadelphia and died 29 November 1874 in that city), followed similar trajectories. Both men married wives from very prominent colonial families: the marriage of John to Martha Meredith, the daughter of Samuel Meredith, on 25 June 1796 added financial and business strength to the political and legislative expertise of the Read family; and John Meredith married into one of the *Mayflower* families when he wed his first wife, Priscilla Marshall, in March 1828. Both John and John Meredith trained as lawyers,[98] both served as members of the Pennsylvania Assembly, and both stood terms as the city solicitor. Whereas grandfather John served in the Pennsylvania state senate, father John Meredith served as a member of the Select Council of Philadelphia. The later decades of their lives were more differentiated. Whereas John settled into a position as the president of the Bank of Philadelphia for twenty-two years, John Meredith continued to work in the fields of law and politics. President Polk nominated John Meredith for a judgeship on the U.S. Supreme Court, but his candidacy was not approved because of his "free-soil" sentiments; instead, he served as the attorney general of Pennsylvania (1846), on

the recommendation of James Buchanan. By 1858, he was elected a judge of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, and he became the chief justice of that court in 1872. Even more remarkable is that John Meredith "at one time was prominently named as a candidate for the Presidency of the United States."[99] Clearly, Judge Read was a highly principled man who commanded a comprehensive knowledge of the law and who led a disciplined life of service.

Following the legacy of his extraordinary ancestors, John Meredith Read Jr. must have felt the combined weight of family expectations and American patriotism on his shoulders. As his parents' only son, he accepted the responsibilities that came along with the privileges of his birth. In order to understand more fully how John Meredith Read Jr. developed into the career diplomat that he became, it is useful to review briefly his formative years in the United States, prior to his appointment in Paris in 1869.

John Meredith Read Jr. was born in Philadelphia on 21 February 1837,[100] but at the tender age of four, two months after the tragic death of his mother, he and his sister were sent to live with their "Aunty" Almira Woods in Providence, Rhode Island.[101] Raised in this loving household but physically separated from his father, Read was an earnest and studious boy, eager to please the adults around him.[102] By the time he was eleven, young Johnny announced that he wanted to pursue a career in the navy, although all hopes for that career were dashed when he sustained a serious injury to his right hand in 1851.[103] At the age of eighteen, after attending military school, he became captain in the regiment of National Cadets, which furnished 127 officers during the Civil War, and then served as aide-de-camp to the governor of Rhode Island, having obtained the rank of colonel by the age of twenty.

Like his father, Read attended Brown University (receiving an MA in 1858), and he then went to Albany Law School (receiving his LLB in 1859). He continued his study of civil and international law in England, France, and Germany, and was admitted to the bar in both Philadelphia and Albany in 1859, but decided to enter public life shortly thereafter. He supported the political campaigns that led to the election of President Abraham Lincoln in both 1860 and 1864, as well as the campaign for President Grant in 1868. Read accepted the office of adjutant general of New York in 1860, with the title and rank of brigadier general; at age twenty-three, he was "the youngest man who had ever held this post." In this position, Read escorted Lincoln from Buffalo to Albany in February 1861. Two months later the Civil War broke out, and Read's military counsel to the New York legislature[104] ultimately resulted in his organizing and equipping fifty-five thousand men at the

beginning of the war, as well as providing care for the wounded.[105] Thus, he was honored with the title of "General," even though his post was merely that of "Chief of Staff of the Militia and Volunteer Forces of the State of New York."[106]

It is clear from Read's correspondence throughout his life that this title of "General" was extremely important to him, especially so since he was physically unable to serve active duty. Not only did it provide a certain status and public recognition of his loyalty and service to his country, but it distinguished him from his father's domain in legal affairs. Becoming his "own man" was the fundamental reason for his early move to New York; Read acknowledged as much in a letter to Edmund C. Stedman of 1 March 1878:[107]

> Did I ever tell you why I settled in the State of New York? I determined to devote myself to public life and I bought in 1858 a house in Albany N.Y. instead of Philadelphia because I did not wish to owe my success to my father's influence but to my own exertions. In March 1869, General Grant informed me that I could have a Mission[108] if I would consent to hail from Pennsylvania. I replied that I felt grateful for the offer but that I wished to owe my position to my own services, that I had identified myself with New York and that I preferred to stand or fall by my record there. The General then remarked that it would be much more difficult for there were numberless applications. A few days later Mr. [Hamilton] Fish nominated me to the President for Minister at The Hague—but General Hugh Ewing was retained and I was offered the Consul Generalship to France—which I at first declined and afterwards accepted upon the advice of Mr. Fish and several Senators.

The process of separating from his father's persona involved not only using the title of General but also privileging the family name of Meredith over the given name of his father, John. Years later, while serving as the minister to Greece, Read chided his son Harmon for addressing a letter to him as General John M. Read, instructing him to send letters to "General Meredith Read, or General Read [—] never to John M. Read."[109] As late as 9 November 1893, Read requested special permission to pass his title of General to his descendants; apparently the policy at the time was that only those who had seen actual combat duty were entitled to bequeath their titles, and Read was arguing that his service as adjutant general was even more "inestimable" because of his heavy oversight responsibilities. In an extensive letter to Doctor Horwitz, Medical Director of the United States Navy, Read recounted his entire military history, from the serious childhood accident to his hand that dashed his dream to attend West Point, to his wartime

activities, arguing that the "Adjutants-General . . . saved the Union. If it had not been for their prompt and patriotic military action, before Grant, and Sherman, and Sheridan were heard of, the Commissions of the Regular Army officers would not have been worth the parchment upon which they were engrossed [*sic*]." He continues, "I determined then and there that I would wear the title I had justly earned when a mere boy in defense of my country. Since then I have received many high honours, but there are none which I value as highly as that which became mine through devotion to the Union."[110]

In the mid- to late 1860s, Read became increasingly active in a number of educational institutions and learned societies. He was a regent of Cornell University from its incorporation in 1865 until 1874.[111] In addition, he was elected as the youngest member of the Royal Irish Academy in 1867, having been proposed by President Lord Talbot de Malahide (see n54) and Sir Bernard Burke, CB. In the same year, the Crown Prince of Denmark proposed him as a founding Fellow of the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries. He was deeply interested in the Foundation of the French Society for the Advancement of Science, serving as a delegate to their Congress in 1872; in 1868, he was the president of the American Social Science Congress at Albany; and in 1872, he served as the vice president of the British Social Science Congress at Plymouth. Also in 1872, Read would become a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London, having been nominated by its president, Earl Stanhope. Finally, he was also a member of the Royal Historical Society, the Royal Archaeological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, and the American Historical Association, among many other professional associations.[112]

Thus, Read's early military, legal, political, and scholarly endeavors prepared him thoroughly for the second half of his life as a diplomat. His official portrait (fig. 4) conveys a positive and confident demeanor, projecting an image of vigor and panache. It is easy to imagine him as a *bon vivant*, a scion of privilege who readily enjoyed his position and happily used it in the service of others.

Read's Commission and the Origins of the March Tune

Given Read's reverence for his family heritage, his fascination with royalty and rank, his deep and abiding intellectual and cultural interests, and his not insignificant ego, it is no surprise that he would approach Debussy for a commission that would tie together his Ross ancestry, the significant honor bestowed upon him by King George of Greece, and music composed by a young artist from his beloved adopted country of

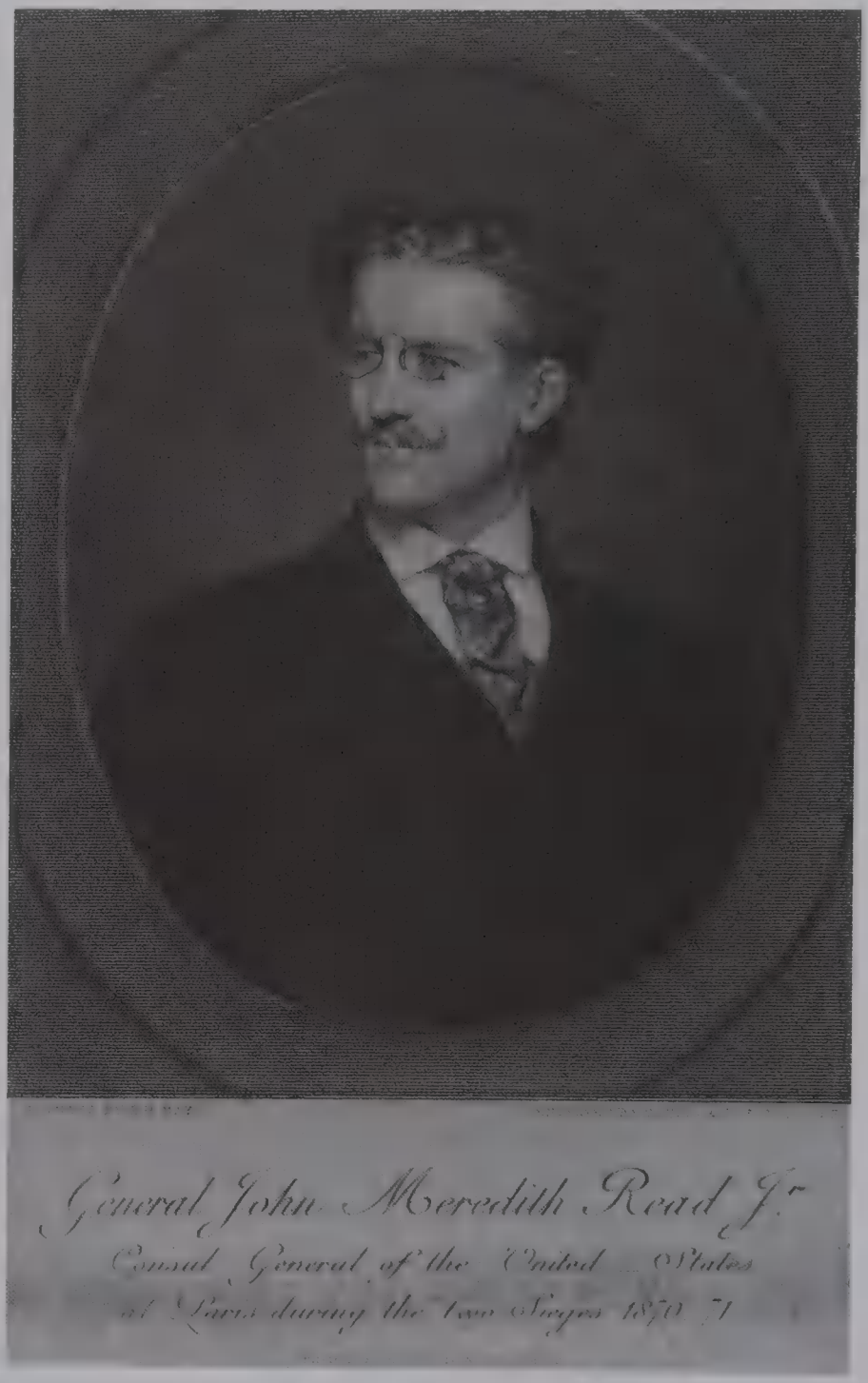


Figure 4. Portrait of John Meredith Read Jr. Reproduced with kind permission of the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, University of Rochester Libraries.

France (moreover, music presumably based on a Scottish tune).[113] No written evidence of Read's actual commission in 1890 has yet surfaced; however, a follow-up letter was sent from "General Meredith Read to

Monsieur Achille Debussy" at 27, rue de Berlin on 24 January 1891. Since it is previously unknown, this letter is presented here in its entirety, in Read's original French as well as in my translation.

> Monsieur: –
>
> J'ai cherché partout, mais je n'ai pas trouvé la Marche des Anciens Comtes de Ross que vous avez composée pour moi. Je me rappelle parfaitement que vous avez demandé ma permission de la reprendre, et je ne sais pas si je l'ai reçu depuis.
>
> En tout cas vous avez ma permission de la publier.
>
> Je vous envoie, ci-inclus, une petite note qui explique l'origine de cette marche.
>
> Je vous prie, Monsieur, d'agréer mes salutations empressées.[114]

> Sir:–
>
> I have looked everywhere, but I have not found the March of the Ancient Earls of Ross that you composed for me. I remember perfectly well that you asked my permission to take it back, and I do not know if I received it since then.
>
> In any case, you have my permission to publish it.
>
> I am sending you, enclosed, a short note that explains the origin of this march.
>
> With best wishes, I am yours sincerely.

This single document provides answers to many of the questions surrounding the commission of the *Marche* that have eluded scholars over the past century. First, it tells us that Read communicated not via an intercessor but directly with Debussy. It also confirms that their mutual language was indeed French. As the letter was addressed to the composer at the home of his parents, we can surmise that either he had moved back with them by 24 January, following his extended stay with Dupin, or at the very least was in close enough contact with them to be receiving mail *chez eux*.[115] Clearly, he had requested Read's permission to publish the work, which he had already contracted to Choudens on 15 January 1891. And apparently he had "borrowed" the piece back from Read, perhaps to make a few final touch-ups or to make a copy for Choudens. The nature of Read's reply, which offers further details about the origin of the *Marche*, implies that he had asked the composer to produce an arrangement of a preexisting tune, and that this melody had special meaning for the Ross clan from which he descended. Debussy's elaborate description that followed the title of the work (fig. 2) was no

doubt based on Read's explanation; indeed, the unusual presentation of the entire title page even invites speculation that Read himself may have offered to cover the cost of its production:[116]

> L'origine des Comtes de Ross, Chef du Clan de Ross / en Rossshire, Ecosse, remonte aux temps les plus reculés.[117] / Le chef était entouré par une bande des "Bagpipers" qui / jouaient cette Marche devant leur "Lord" avant et pendant / la bataille et aussi aux jours de gala. La Marche primitive / est le chœur de la Marche actuelle.
>
> The origin of the Earls of Ross, chief[s] of the Ross clan in Rossshire, Scotland, goes back to the most remote times. The earl was surrounded by a band of "bagpipers" who used to play this march in front of their "Lord" before and during battle, and also on festival days. The original march [melody] is the refrain of the current march.

The implication that the melody of the march was originally a Scottish piping tune is aurally confirmed when one hears Debussy's work, whose melody is eminently playable on the bagpipes and is unlike anything else he ever composed. And, an "Earl of Ross March" does in fact exist; a famous piping tune, it is a veritable staple in the proficient bagpiper's repertoire.[118] The only problem is that the tune given to Debussy by Read is not the well-known "Earl of Ross March." How, then, did Read procure this melody, and what was its true title and provenance?

Read visited Scotland as a young man on his first tour of Europe in 1857, and then again in 1877 while still serving in Greece. Shortly after his second visit, he corresponded with R. B. A. Macleod at Invergordon Castle in Rossshire, Scotland, asking if Macleod had received "the copy of the chronicle of the Earls of Ross which you so kindly loaned to me last October?"[119] That chronicle was surely a manuscript at Dunrobin Castle, "known as the Deuchar [*sic?*] M. S. and named 'a Brief of the Chronicles of the Earls of Ross' and undated"[120] and which Read referenced five years later in a letter to Francis Neville Reid, the author of *The Earls of Ross and Their Descendants*. The then retired General Read was answering Reid's questions about the American Rosses, but he followed his report with a fascinating comment:

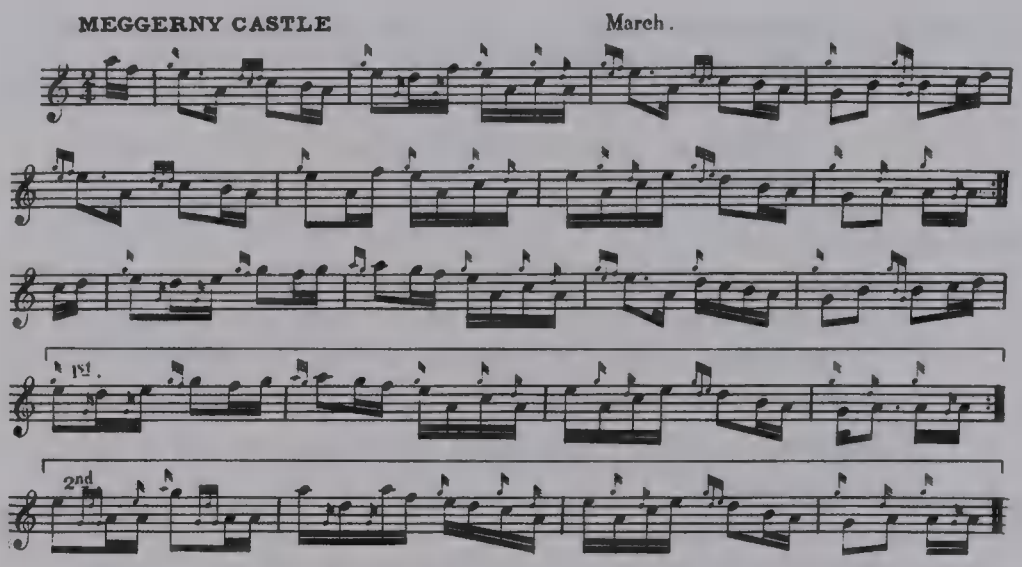
> Some time ago I made a search in Scotland for the March of the Earls of Ross, and succeeded, through Mr. James Ross (not a connection), who now holds a portion of Balblair as a tenant, in getting the March written down by an old piper. I then gave it to a young composer here, who made the primitive march the chorus of his composition. His effort is

> certainly not worthy of admiration, and I intend to try to have the primitive march of our ancestors framed in a better setting.
>
> P.S. I am causing the March of the Earls of Ross to be sent to you by this post and I trust that it will arrive safely.[121]

And, in a letter from 9 May 1891 to the James Ross referenced in the above letter, at the Balblair Distillery, Edderton, Rossshire, we read: "I send you a copy of the March of the Earls of Ross composed for four hands by a distinguished French composer. I think more might have been made out of the original refrain. The setting is a little hard and monotonous."[122]

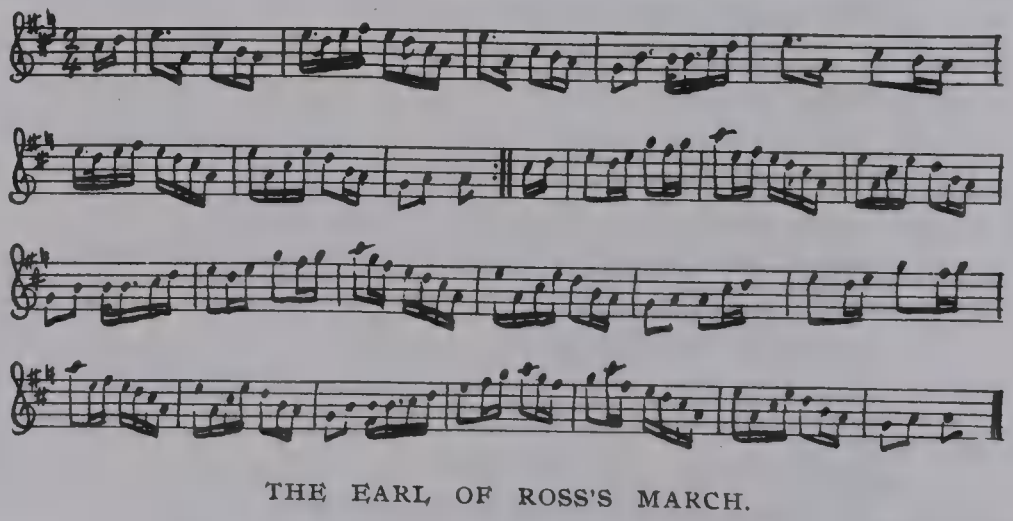
From these fascinating accounts, two additional points emerge. First, Read clearly did not care for Debussy's arrangement of what he thought was his family's tune. One senses that he felt that the "original refrain" was too understated, and that the work was somewhat repetitious. It is curious that there is no mention of a live performance of the work, although one could easily imagine that it might have been played at a dinner party or salon. However, given Read's lifelong propensity for recording virtually everything he did on a daily basis, and given the fact that no reports of a performance have yet surfaced among his papers, it is unlikely that the work received any serious visibility, perhaps because ultimately he did not find Debussy's arrangement satisfying and thus chose not to highlight it. But a second point must also be raised, which is that Read's references to this piece treat it not as an aural experience but rather as a historic document, suitable for cataloguing in one's library. He clearly viewed the work as a relic of the Ross clan rather than as an artistic creation in its own right.

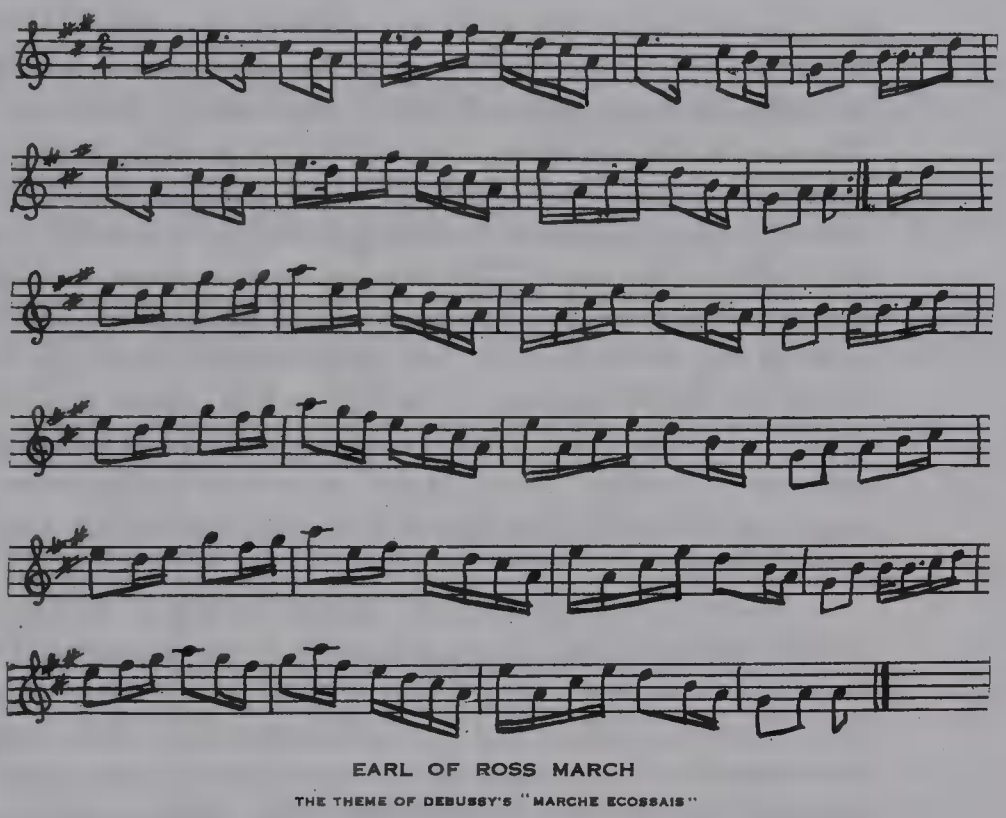
Ironically, in Read's eyes, the key salient feature of this piece was that it was based on his ancestral family's piping tune. He had no reason to doubt the authenticity of the tune that the "old piper" in Rossshire had notated, and that he subsequently passed on to Debussy, but he would have been chagrined to discover that it was not the "Earl of Ross March" after all. An extensive search involving librarians as well as bagpipers worldwide[123] has at last resulted in a positive identification of the melody for the *Marche*. "Meggerny Castle" (ex. 1) is one of the marches printed in *The Bagpipe Works of Donald MacPhee* (1876).[124] Amazingly, the tune of "Meggerny Castle" also appears on the unnumbered page opposite page 7 of *Rossiana*, the genealogical tome authored by Read's son, Major Harmon Pumpelly Read (1908); however, in the Read publication, the tune is titled "The Earl of Ross's March" and is copied out by hand on a treble staff with F-sharp, C-sharp, and G-natural in the key



Example 1. "Meggerny Castle," reprinted from *The Bagpipe Works of Donald MacPhee.*

signature, shifting the melody into the mixolydian mode (ex. 2). Curiously, even though the short, four-line melody occupies a full page in the volume, Harmon Pumpelly Read's prose text makes no reference whatsoever to it. Furthermore, this melody reappears in print six years later, still with no prose explanation, on page 109 of Alexander Ross MacMahon's volume on the *Ross Clan in America* (1914), but this time, the melody is labeled both as the "Earl of Ross March" and as "The Theme of Debussy's 'Marche Ecossais' [*sic*]" (ex. 3). The notated tune is now cast in A major (note the three sharps in the key signature) but with a couple of changes in pitch (the anacrusis to measure 17 is awkwardly



Example 2. "The Earl of Ross's March," from Major Harmon Pumpelly Read, *Rossiana.*

Example 3. "Earl of Ross March" and "The Theme of Debussy's 'Marche ecossais' [*sic*]," from Alexander Ross MacMahon, *Ross Clan in America.*

notated as $b_4 - c\#_5$ instead of $c\#_5 - d_5$) and in what appears to be the same chirography. While the physical parsing of the tune in MacMahon's book is more clearly laid out in four-bar lines (for a total of six lines instead of four), the musical notation is clearly that of a novice. As shown in examples 2 and 3, the rhythms for the second beats of mm. 4, 12, and 20 are idiosyncratic, and the downward stemming of the notes in mm. 8 and 24 connotes an inexperienced scribe. These data suggest at the very least a lack of familiarity with music notation, but they also imply that the "old piper" from Scotland had, either unknowingly or deliberately, confused "Meggerny Castle" with "The Earl of Ross's March," and that ever since the Read/Ross family had appropriated it as their family tune.

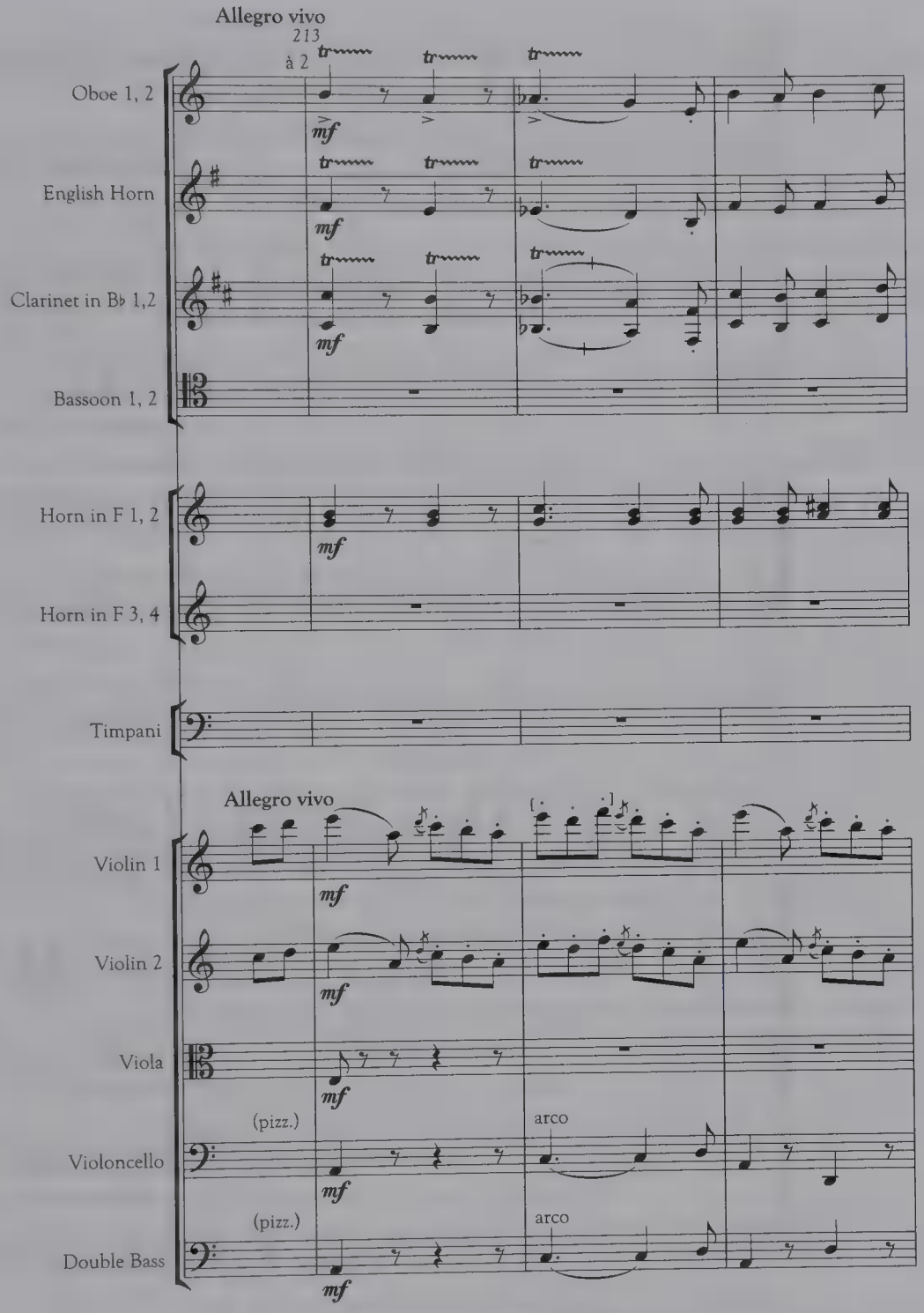
Debussy's Musical Treatment of the Tune

As Debussy had been transcribing and arranging for piano the orchestral scores of various other composers in the late 1890s (see above), he was ripe for Read's job. His original arrangement of the *Marche des Anciens Comtes de Ross* was prepared for piano, four hands, like many of his

previous orchestral transcriptions. Although this original setting was published by Choudens,[125] the piece was subsequently arranged for orchestra, with an expanded ending, and issued by Jobert in 1911.[126] The work's title was changed to the *Marche écossaise* and it was subtitled *sur un thème populaire*.[127] Fromont issued a second edition of the composition for four-hands piano, which included the expanded ending from the orchestral version.[128] This edition, in an apparent attempt to blend the first editions for four-hands piano and for orchestra, identified the work as the *Marche écossaise / sur un thème populaire* on the title page but as the *Marche écossaise / (The Earl of Ross "March")* at the top of pages 2–3 of the score. Whether the piece was to be called the *Marche écossaise* or *The Earl of Ross "March"* is perhaps less important than the matter of highlighting the origins of its principal melody, the Scottish piping tune.

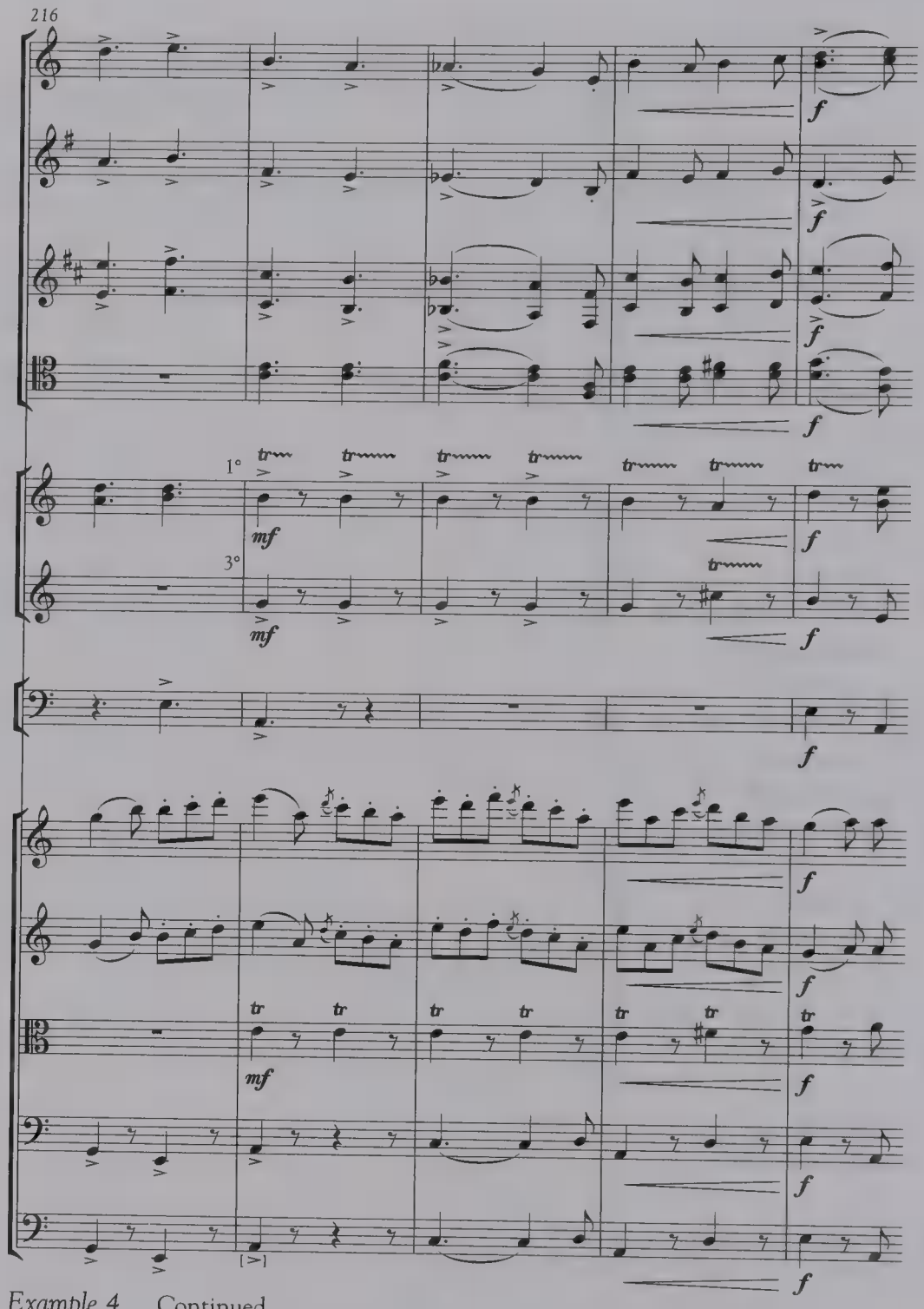
Several characteristics of the "Meggerny Castle" melody bear distinctive qualities that Debussy featured in his arrangement. The typical drone of the bagpipe is represented in his score by frequent open fifths underneath the melody, and the typical grace notes of the bagpipe tune are reflected in the graces of the top voice (given to the violins in the orchestral version) near the end of the work, when the melody shifts to a rollicking 6/8 (ex. 4). As well, Debussy's effective use of the oboe and English horn in his orchestral version of the work enhances the *cornemuse* qualities of the tune. Whether the young composer fully understood the nature of the bagpipe instrument, especially as its tuning affects the modality, we may never know. However, although the original tune is notated in A natural-minor (ex. 1), when it is performed on the bagpipe, the C-naturals and F-naturals will sound closer to C-sharps and F-sharps, throwing the tune into mixolydian.[129] Thus, the rendition from the "old piper" in Scotland, notated with C-sharp, F-sharp, and G-natural (ex. 2), was perhaps not so far off the actual "sounding" melody. Debussy's arrangement, whether intuitively or purposefully, capitalized on this multimodal feature. He opens his work in minor, closes it in major, and even hints at the mixolydian mode in his overall tonal scheme.

The bipartite structure of the "Meggerny Castle" melody (ex. 2), where an "a" section consists of eight bars in A minor and "b" consists of another set of eight bars that move from C major back to A minor, is retained by Debussy in his rondo-like treatment of the tune. The "Meggerny Castle" *cantus* appears three times in the *Marche écossaise*, but its length varies each time. In its first appearance at measure 27, "a" is not repeated but "b" is, resulting in a twenty-four-bar presentation; its second iteration, beginning at measure 96, is truncated considerably, presenting only the eight bars of "a" and then repeating them; and the



Example 4. Debussy, *Marche écossaise*, mm. 213–20.

last, sixteen-bar appearance beginning in measure 213 exposes both "a" and "b" without any repeats. A clear return to the tonic key of A minor for each of these three refrains of the "Meggerny Castle" tune (with the



Example 4. Continued.

"b" section of the final statement beginning in tonic major rather than in the relative major) imparts to the listener a sense of rondo form; it is possible that these frequent tonic returns contributed to Read's

assessment of the piece as "monotonous" in Debussy's four-hand piano arrangement. However, in the coda, based on fragments of "a" material, Debussy shifts the melody to major (underscored by the entry of the brass in the orchestral version); motives derived from the head of "a" are especially prominent in the expanded ending, where they are sequenced from A to B to G, thereby encircling the tonic of A major with a subtle mixolydian inflection that is characteristic of piping tunes. Finally, within the rondo structure, the principle of variation abounds in Debussy's composition; even the extended middle section, "Calme," in the submediant key of F major is clearly derived from the *cantus*. The listener's expectations of an arrangement of a folk tune are thus fulfilled by Debussy's variations on the Scottish theme.

But Debussy's *Marche écossaise* goes beyond a mere arrangement of "Meggerny Castle." The inspired introduction features a coloristic, whole-tone "wash" of sound, and in many ways his work displays some of the same compositional devices used so effectively in his orchestral *Printemps*, which had been completed in 1887. Debussy's juxtaposition of thematic ideas (usually in four-bar groups), his contrapuntal combination of themes (see in particular measure 173 of the *Marche*), his reliance on third relations between major sections of the piece and stepwise movement in the bass as he approaches the final cadence, and his increasingly fast tempi (in the case of the *Marche*, combined with a shift from 2/4 to a jig-like 6/8) toward the climactic end, where he lunges into major and summons the brass instruments—all of these compositional techniques generate a great deal of excitement for the listener.

General Meredith Read would not live to hear the dazzling orchestral version of his *Marche* with its expanded coda. A comedy of errors, from missed deadlines for planned performances of the *Marche* to compositional revisions and tinkering with the orchestration, delayed the publication of the orchestral version until 1911. In June 1893, Debussy wrote in a letter to Ernest Chausson[130] (who had originally suggested that Debussy orchestrate his piece) that he had nearly finished the *Marche* but had heard nothing from Eugène Ysaÿe, who had planned to perform it in Brussels sometime during that summer. Chausson offered to help Debussy copy out the orchestral parts, and the two men exchanged several letters concerning this task,[131] but ultimately Debussy dragged his feet and Ysaÿe remained uncommunicative, so the opportunity passed. Apparently Debussy eventually sent a score to Ysaÿe but then needed it back for another potential performance opportunity, this time at the Palmarium in the Jardin d'acclimatation in Paris, for a concert by the Société des grandes auditions musicales de France

(chaired by the Comtesse Greffulhe) on 29 May 1894, to be conducted by Édouard Colonne. Yet again, Debussy missed his chance, this time because Ysaÿe neglected to send his score of the *Marche* back to him in time.[132] Two years later, on 13 October 1896, Debussy announced to Ysaÿe that he had reworked the orchestration of the *Marche*,[133] and on 17 November 1896, he reported that he had hoped to send Ysaÿe the orchestral parts for the "new version," but the engraver missed his request and it was again too late to do anything about it.[134] For the next decade, long after Read's death in December 1896, there is no mention of the *Marche*; when Debussy writes about the work again in 1907–8, it is not in favorable terms.[135]

In fact, it was not until well after 1911, the year that Jobert finally published the orchestral version of the *Marche*, that Debussy even heard his own work. Désiré-Émile Inghelbrecht wrote of the occasion,[136] at a rehearsal for the Nouveaux Concerts at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, when Debussy entered unannounced and confessed that he had never heard the *Marche*. Inghelbrecht interrupted the rehearsal immediately to play the piece for the composer,[137] who at last pronounced his approval: "Mais, c'est joli!" ("It's lovely!"). Debussy conducted the work himself with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam in February 1914.[138]

In the end, General Meredith Read could add with pride the commission of Debussy's *Marche écossaise* to his formidable list of contributions in the worlds of art, literature, diplomacy, and politics. Although this commission seems to have been motivated by the desire to extol the family heritage and personal accomplishments of General Meredith Read, it not only supported Debussy at a very challenging time in his personal and professional life, but it left for posterity a composition that ultimately pleased its creator. A highly accessible work, the *Marche écossaise* deserves to be performed more often.

Notes

Marie Rolf is a Professor of Music Theory and the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies at the Eastman School of Music. She has contributed articles to a wide variety of publications, including *Rethinking Debussy*; *Berlioz and Debussy: Sources, Contexts and Legacies*; *Debussy and His World*; *Debussy Studies*; *Haydn Studies*; *Cahiers Debussy*; *Mozart Jahrbuch*; *Music Theory Spectrum*; *The Musical Quarterly*; *19th-Century Music*; *MLA Notes*; *Perspectives on Music*; *Intégral*; and the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. She has prepared the critical edition of Debussy's *La Mer*, as well as a reconstruction of Mozart's Concert Rondo for Horn, KV 371, and a facsimile edition of Debussy's *Les Papillons*. Rolf is a member of the editorial board of the *Œuvres complètes de Claude Debussy* (1982–present). E-mail: mrolf@esm.rochester.edu

I am grateful to colleagues Louise Goldberg and Ralph Locke for their steadfast encouragement of this project and for their expert editorial advice in preliminary drafts of this article.

1. Read is identified as a Scottish officer in Léon Vallas, *Claude Debussy et son temps* (Paris: Éditions Albin Michel, 1958), 128; Marcel Dietschy, *La Passion de Claude Debussy* (Neuchâtel: Éditions de la Baconnière, 1962), 89–90; and in William Ashbrook and Margaret G. Cobb's translation, *A Portrait of Claude Debussy* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 73; Edward Lockspeiser, *Debussy: His Life and Mind*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 1:125n3 (Lockspeiser misspells Read's name as "Reid"); and as a Scottish general who had American roots by François Lesure, *Claude Debussy: Biographie critique* (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 2003), 121. Both Dietschy and Lesure mention the tale regarding the intervention of Alphonse Allais as translator, as do biographers Germaine and D. E. Inghelbrecht in their *Claude Debussy* (Paris: Costard et Cie., 1953), 125. Readers interested in learning more about the fascinating figure of Alphonse Allais and his boyhood friend from Honfleur, Erik Satie, are encouraged to consult Steven Moore Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), esp. 91, 178, and 180; and Robert Orledge, *Satie the Composer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), esp. 210; in addition, the Petit Musée d'Alphonse Allais in Honfleur has a charming web site, http://www.boiteallais.com/. Robert Orledge, in his review of Lesure's earlier critical biography of Debussy (Paris: Klincksieck, 1994) in *Music and Letters* 77, no. 1 (February 1996): 132–33, debunked the myth of Read's need for any translation services.

2. Major repositories of Read family materials are housed at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP: twenty-four boxes on permanent loan from the Library Company of Philadelphia); the New York State Library (NYSL: seventeen boxes of family material in the Manuscripts & Special Collections division); the New York Public Library (NYPL: fourteen boxes in the Manuscripts and Archives Division); the University of Rochester's Rush Rhees Library (UR: thirteen boxes in the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections); the Library of Congress (LC: eight boxes in the Manuscript Division; and the Historical Society of Delaware (HSD: five boxes plus individual scrapbooks and files) in Wilmington; not to mention the more modest holdings of Read papers at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania; Princeton University; and Columbia University. I would like to thank librarians Sarah Heim and Steve Smith (HSP), Christine Beauregard (Manuscripts & Special Collections, NYSL), Thomas Lannon (Manuscripts and Archives Division, NYPL), Richard Peek, Phyllis Anderson, Mary Huth, Jean Lombard, Melissa Mead, and Rosemary Switzer (Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Rush Rhees Library, UR), Constance Cooper (HSD), and James Gerencser (Dickinson College) for their assistance in my work with Read family papers. In addition, Stephanie Frontz (Art and Music Library, UR) provided invaluable assistance in searching for paintings by Armand Dumaresq.

3. Raised in a prominent colonial family, Read followed in his Republican father's footsteps. At one point considered a candidate for the U.S. presidency, Read's father (John Meredith Read) eventually threw his support to Abraham Lincoln, for whose campaign in 1860 John Meredith Read Jr. also worked, as a founder of the Wide Awakes, a quasi-military organization, and as the president of the Union Republican General Committee.

4. Read valued and cultivated many friendships and acquaintances throughout his life; his diaries are filled with detailed descriptions of individuals that clearly served as personal *aide-mémoires* for his many social duties. He was especially proud of his close connections with royalty, from King George of Greece to Albert Edward and Alexandra, the Prince and Princess of Wales, respectively. In addition to attending countless state banquets and receptions, Read was active in many social clubs both in the United States and abroad. In Paris, he was a devoted member of the Spartiates Academy, a group of literary and artistic gentlemen who mingled with ambassadors, ministers, and the like; their stimulating "Dîners des Spartiates" were recounted at length by Read in "The Spartans of Paris: Leaves from My Autobiography," published in two issues of *The Magazine of American History* 26, no. 2 (August 1891): 81–102; and 26, no. 3 (September 1891): 161–77. Their social gatherings, filled with witty repartee, were held at places like the Trois Frères Provençaux, then at the Moulin Rouge in the Avenue d'Antin, during the summers at the Café des Ambassadeurs, then later at the Hôtel Continental, the Lion d'Or, and the Café Riche. (As reported by Read in "The Spartans of Paris," [*Magazine of American History* 26, no. 3: 169]; and in A.R28, Box 3/8, 45 [of partial typescript numbered 31–57], John Meredith Read Papers, UR.)

5. According to Major Harmon Pumpelly Read, *Rossiana: Papers and Documents Relating to the History and Genealogy of the Ancient and Noble House of Ross of Rossshire, Scotland, and Its Descent from the Ancient Earls of Ross, together with the Descent of the Ancient and Historic Family of Read from Rede of Troughend, Reade of Barton Court, Berks, and Read of Delaware* (Albany: [Argus Co.], 1908), 306, Read was officially appointed as U.S. minister to Greece on 7 November 1873, but appointment documents, signed by Hamilton Fish on 19 November 1873 and by Grant on 10 December 1873, exist in Box 6, Read Family Papers, LC, and Box 8, Clymer–Meredith–Read Papers, NYPL, respectively. Due to Read's wife's serious illness following the birth of her daughter, the family's move to Athens was delayed until 1874. See letters of 9 May 1873, 6 and 25 June 1873, 4 August 1873, 5 December 1873 (Box 4, Clymer–Meredith–Read Papers, NYPL), as well as letters of 13 June 1873, 8 August 1873, 6 and 11 September 1873, 7 and 17 October 1873, and two letters from January 1874 (Box 13, item 45, Read Family Papers, NYSL).

6. Read officially resigned from his post in Greece on 23 September 1879. See H. P. Read, *Rossiana*, 308.

7. The official appointment document, signed by Grant, may be viewed in Box 8, Clymer–Meredith–Read Papers, NYPL.

8. In "The Spartans of Paris" (*Magazine of American History* 26, no. 2: 92), Read extols the philanthropic efforts of his friend Arsène Houssaye involving his financial support of an ambulance service during the siege in Paris. A diary entry (Box 7, Read Family Papers, NYSL) relates a "soirée dramatique," an evening of music and drama, hosted by Houssaye "in his so justly celebrated hotel in the Avénue [*sic*] Friedland," as a benefit for the ambulance corps. Read himself had regular contact with the American ambulance during the siege of Paris. See diary entries for 26 September, 9 November, and 1 December 1870 (Box 8, Clymer–Meredith–Read Papers, NYPL).

9. See the six-page typescript of Read's biography, in English (Box 4/4, 4, John Meredith Read Papers, UR), as well as a diary entry for 10 September 1870 (Box 8, Clymer–Meredith–Read Papers, NYPL).

10. Read sent his family to Granville, near Saint-Malo, on 8 September 1870, while remaining in Paris to face the considerable challenges and deprivations of the siege on his own; see "The Spartans of Paris" (*Magazine of American History* 26, no. 2: 82) and also diary entry for 7 September 1870 (Box 8, Clymer–Meredith–Read Papers, NYPL). Apparently only two of the more than a hundred letters his wife had written to him actually reached him in Paris during this period. He recorded in his 1870 diary that he spent Christmas and New Year's alone, ill, and despondent (Box 8, Clymer–Meredith–Read Papers, NYPL).

11. See, for example, his diary entry for 12 October 1870 (Box 8, Clymer–Meredith–Read Papers, NYPL).

12. See diary entries for 8 October 1870 and for 19 December 1870 (Box 8, Clymer–Meredith–Read Papers, NYPL).

13. Two letters to his father, of 10 October and 7 November 1870, make particular mention of food shortages during the siege (Box 2, file 14, Read Family Materials, NYSL). In the former, Read writes that "God has placed me here for some good purpose and will carry me safely and honorably through." Interestingly, in a letter to his father from 16 September 1870, Read writes of his experience of the siege, "I am conscious of a mental growth of several inches within the last ten days" (Box 37, folder 13, George Ross Rede Collection [Accession 51.27], HSD). And earlier that same month, he wrote: "If these sad things have to happen I am glad that I have been here to witness them—it is a most important experience for a student and writer of history" (Box 2, file 14, Read Family Papers, NYSL).

14. See diary entry of 17 May 1871 (Box 8, Clymer–Meredith–Read Papers, NYPL). In some fascinating entries in his Agenda from 1871, Read recounts on 13 May that he moved his family from their home at 37, avenue d'Antin to 35, rue Blanche, the former home having sustained damage from explosions; on 22–24 May, he writes about the destruction at his office at 55, rue du Cardinal Fesch (Box 7, Read Family Papers, NYSL).

15. Typescript of Read's biography that was prepared for *Men and Women of the Time* (February 1894) but never published (Box 4/4, 3, John Meredith Read Papers, UR).

16. Letter of 7 March 1873 (Box 13, file 45, Read Family Papers, NYSL).

17. Letters, dated 30 April 1852 and 3 July 1852, from Read to his father, document that he was already learning French as a fifteen-year-old (see (Phi) 1668, box titled "Correspondance: 1850–1859," folder "Correspondence, 1852," John Meredith Read Papers, HSP). Five years later, on 9 February 1857, Read's "Aunty" Almira Woods informed his father that Read was avidly studying French, on the advice of his cousin (Box 4, Clymer–Meredith–Read Papers, NYPL). Writing from Athens much later, on 24 February 1875, Read modestly confessed to Arsène Houssaye, "Je regrette que je ne peux pas écrire le français avec exactitude. Cependant vous constaterez, n'est-ce pas, que j'ai fait de [*sic*] progrès depuis que je suis Ministre. Une autre promotion peut-être me perfectionnerait dans votre belle langue" (see "Copy of Private Letters of General Read, Athens, 1875," H. F. Brown Collection, HSD). Finally, Read reported a recent grade in Greek, 19 4/5 out of a perfect score of 20, in a letter to his father dated 19 July 1853 (box titled "Correspondence, 1853," John Meredith Read Papers, HSP).

18. Diary entry, 10 October 1870 (Box 8, Clymer–Meredith–Read Papers, NYPL).

19. Typescript prepared for *Who's Who* (25 September 1896). See Box 4/4, 1, John Meredith Read Papers, UR.

20. Read's letter copybooks, especially those preserved at the HSD and NYSL, are filled with correspondence to individuals in the United States, England, Scotland, Ireland, and elsewhere, seeking genealogical details. See in particular a letter from Paris on 26 May 1887 (Folder 154, Richard S. Rodney Collection, HSD) in which Read wrote: "Let me say here that I have made this task a labor of love and that I have spared neither time, nor money, nor labor during the last thirty years, and that there is no one living who knows as much about our family—and even all families bearing names resembling ours—as I do." Much of Read's genealogical work was published two years after his death by his English relative Compton Reade, in *A Record of the Redes of Barton Court, Berks* (Hereford: Jakeman and Carver, High Town, 1899); the preface of this book outlines the scope of Read's exhaustive research. His son Harmon Pumpelly Read inherited Read's fascination with the family forebears, and Harmon would go on to continue his father's genealogical work well after the diplomat's death in 1896; see n5.

21. A passion for collecting and reading rare books and materials ran in the family. In particular, Read's grandfather John Read and John's grandfather Col. John Read were avid collectors. See H. P. Read, *Rossiana*, 298, and a letter from Read to Samuel C. Perkins, dated 5 August 1875, in *Copy of Private Letters of General Read, Athens, 1875*, H. F. Brown Collection, HSD. A catalog of John Read's library may be found in Box 3, Clymer–Meredith–Read Papers, NYPL.

22. These letters were purchased by Read on 24 March 1881 at the Drouot in Paris and are described in Box 11/1, "Harmon P. Read. Albany," Notebook, [12], John Meredith Read Papers, UR.

23. See Henry A. Homes, *Description and Analysis of the Remarkable Collection of Unpublished Manuscripts of Robert Morris, the First Financial Minister of the United States from 1781 to 1784, Including His Official and Private Diary and Correspondence, in Sixteen Folio Volumes. The Property of General John Meredith Read, F. S. A., M. R. I. A., Minister of the United States to Greece* (Albany: Joel Munsell, 1876). The Robert Morris papers eventually ended up in the Manuscript Division, LC.

24. This librarian was subsequently employed at the Louvre in Paris. See letter of 5 February 1878 from Read to William Hunter (Box 12, file 13, Read Family Papers, NYSL). Hunter served in the U.S. Department of State and was in the process of building his own music collection.

25. Read left a touching description of Gautier, one of the three original founders of the Spartiates Academy (along with Arsène Houssaye and Paul de Saint-Victor) in "The Spartans of Paris" (*Magazine of American History* 26, no. 2: 161–62) and in Box 3/8, 31–33 (of partial typescript numbered 31–57), John Meredith Read Papers, UR.

26. See Read, "The Spartans of Paris" (*Magazine of American History* 26, no. 3: 165–66) and Box 3/8, 38–39 (of partial typescript numbered 31–57), John Meredith Read Papers, UR.

27. Box 2/8, 87, John Meredith Read Papers, UR. Read's description of the young Wilde as tall, blonde, "perhaps 25," and an individual who "speaks with facility"

illustrates his lifelong habit for keeping notes on his guests and passing acquaintances. Read's earlier description of Charles Dickens as "a figure of medium height, a white camellia in his button hole and somewhat foppishly dressed, comes quickly to the front with elastic step" furnishes another memorable example of this habit (Box 3/2, "General Meredith Read's English Recollections. Charles Dickens Description," 1, John Meredith Read Papers, UR).

28. In a fragment of his autobiography, left unfinished at the time of his death, Read reminisced on his father's home in Philadelphia, recalling that "the great rooms and halls in the old house were filled with ancient books and pictures, and from the walls looked down the full-length portraits of many generations of departed ancestors." Quoted in H. P. Read, *Rossiana*, 316. He later credited his aunt, Mrs. Woods, for acquainting him "with the works and biographies of all the great men of past times in literature and in art" (ibid., 322).

29. Box 7B/3, 174–76, John Meredith Read Papers, UR.

30. Two of the most controversial questions involved whether the Venus's arms were intact at the time of discovery and whether her left hand had at one time held an apple. Jean Aicard wrote about this controversy in articles in *Le Temps* in 1874. Read cites from Aicard's "La Vénus de Milo, Recherches sur l'histoire de la découverte, d'après des documents inédits" in his Notebook 97, Box 8/5, John Meredith Read Papers, UR.

31. Box 7B/3, 178, and Box 2/5, 25–26, John Meredith Read Papers, UR.

32. In Paris, Read lived primarily at 37, avenue d'Antin, west of the Champs-Élysées, during the early 1870s, and later on at 128, rue la Boëtie, during the 1890s.

33. In a letter from 29 December 1890, Read offers great detail on the models, including Gilbert Stuart's *Washington* in the Athenaeum in Boston and John Trumbull's *Declaration of Independence* in the Capitol in Washington, DC, for the various components of this picture (Box 12, file 18, Read Family Papers, NYSL). Read particularly admired M. Dumaresq's work "during the siege of Paris in painting the various warlike scenes about him. He had also in his employ several other artists, all engaged upon a gigantic panorama of 'Paris during the Siege.' I went frequently to his studio [33, rue Laval, Paris] at this time" (Box 3/5, "Impressions of Paris and France" from Notebook 37, [2], John Meredith Read Papers, UR). Armand Dumaresq's oil painting *The Signing of the Declaration of Independence*, completed ca. 1873 while Read was still in Paris, is currently part of the White House Collection; see http://www.whitehouseresearch.org/assetbank-whha/action/viewAsset?id=35&index=0&total=2&view=viewSearchItem. A pencil sketch of the work was in Mrs. Meredith Read's possession, according to http://hamsey.bsvr.co.uk/assetbank-whha/action/viewasset?id=195. Interestingly, Read's own son studied painting with Armand Dumaresq (Box 9, Clymer–Meredith–Read Papers, NYPL).

34. Box 1/15, Notebooks 36, 37, 38, 2: and Box 3/5, "Impressions of Paris and France," Notebook 37, [2], John Meredith Read Papers, UR.

35. Read letter of 6 February 1873 to William B. Clymer (Box 13, file 45, Read Family Papers, NYSL); and H. P. Read, *Rossiana*, 280.

36. Read continues his description of the painting: "a sombre scene, with the shattered bridge of Sévres [*sic*] and the ice-bound river enveloped in a dark-gray atmosphere,

lighted up by the exploding shells of the French and German batteries, which was afterward etched by Lalanne." See "The Spartans of Paris" (*Magazine of American History* 26, no. 2: 96). Incidentally, Read's own copy of Lalanne's *Croquis à l'eau-forte* (Paris: Cadart & Luce, 1869[–1871]), inscribed "au Général J. Meredith Read / Hommage de son bien dévoué / Maxime Lalanne," was listed for sale on the antiquarian market by Donald A. Heald; http://www.donaldheald.com/search/search_01.php (14 June 2010). Read's harrowing departure from Paris is also recounted in his diary entry of 6 January 1871 (Box 8, Clymer–Meredith–Read Papers, NYPL).

37. An "Inventaire après le déces de Mme Meredith Read, née Pumpelly" may be consulted in Box 8, Clymer–Meredith–Read Papers, NYPL.

38. For example, he noted, on 20 June 1890, a portrait of Washington by Gilbert Stuart at the home of the Marquis and the Marquise de Las Cazes at "21, rue Fossée St. Jacques [*sic*] (Box 3/8, "Recollections of General Meredith Read [France. Marquis de Las Cazes.]," 1, John Meredith Read Papers, UR). He also commented on the portrait of Washington at the home of M. and Mme de Courcelle in a diary entry, 10 November 1870 (Box 8, Clymer–Meredith–Read Papers, NYPL).

39. A copy of the contract is preserved in Box 5, file 6, Read Family Papers, NYSL.

40. Box 4/13, "Copy of Private Letters of General Read, Athens, 1876," 40–42, John Meredith Read Papers, UR. Read's father commissioned Lincoln's portrait in the late summer of 1860, and it was apparently duplicated and used for publicity purposes during Lincoln's campaign that year; both Mary Lincoln and Abraham Lincoln wrote thank-you notes to Read's father, on 25 and 27 August 1860, respectively (Box 5, Read Family Papers, LC).

41. Letters of 22 February 1856 and 22 July 1856 (box titled *Correspondance: 1850–1859*, folder "Correspondence, 1856," John Meredith Read Papers, HSP).

42. On 26 November 1859, Read wrote: "Every evening when I come home from my office I sit down and look at those pictures and they do my heart good" (Folder 152, Richard S. Rodney Collection, HSD).

43. See correspondence from 25 January 1860 and 28 March 1860 involving Read's commissioning the painter Sully to copy Robert Edge Pine's portrait of George Read as well as his request for Goupil's restoration of a miniature ivory portrait of John Read (Folder 152, Richard S. Rodney Collection, HSD). Sully's letter from 21 February 1860 (Box 37, folder 13, George Ross Rede Collection, HSD) discusses details of the frame for this picture. A copy of the Sully portrait of George Read was given by the family to Independence Hall in Philadelphia. For further correspondence regarding these and other family portraits, see letters of 5 April 1862, 3 May 1862, and 10 December 1862 (Folder 152, Richard S. Rodney Collection, HSD).

44. Gertrude Ross married George Read, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Her brother George Ross was also a signer, and her half brother John Ross was a highly successful lawyer. A list of the Ross family portraits in America is available in Alexander Ross MacMahon, *Ross Clan in America* (Annual. Submitted by Alexander Ross MacMahon. Devon, Pennsylvania, 1914), 160.

45. H. P. Read, *Rossiana*, 160–61.

46. Read's letter to his father, 22 July 1856, is in box titled *Correspondance: 1850–1859*, folder "Correspondence, 1856," John Meredith Read Papers, HSP.

47. Goupil's engraving was made after an original painting by Van Elven, and Read noted in particular that the portraits were taken "from life" ("The Spartans of Paris," *Magazine of American History* 26, no. 2: 88). The French firm of Goupil & Cie. flourished, under different names and leadership, for nearly a century. Founded in the 1820s, it produced prints of works by nineteenth-century academic artists, some Old Masters (especially Dutch), most of the artists of the Barbizon School, and even some of the Impressionists. See http://www.culture.gouv.fr/GOUPIL/FILES/.

48. "The Spartans of Paris," *Magazine of American History* 26, no. 2: 96.

49. "The Spartans of Paris," *Magazine of American History* 26, no. 3: 170. Read also relished a landscape of the *Palais Barberini, Grand Canal, Venise*, painted for him at "3:30 p.m., 7 juin 1881" by Spartiates member Ziem. Read wrote of it, "Le tableau de mon ami le Roi Soleil est le plus joli morceau de lumière que j'ai vu. Paris et Venise se marient dans mes salons, grace au Maître Ziem." ("The Spartans of Paris," *Magazine of American History* 26, no. 2: 97–100.)

50. Box 11, file 10, Read Family Papers, NYSL.

51. Box 7, Agenda 1872, Read Family Papers, NYSL.

52. Letters of 29 March, 18 April, 24 May, 1 June, and 21 June (Box 13, item 46, Read Family Papers, NYSL).

53. Houssaye had sponsored Read for the Spartiates, and he also would host a memorable farewell for him when the latter moved from Paris to Athens. "The Spartans of Paris," *Magazine of American History* 26, no. 2: 86.

54. In "The Spartans of Paris" (*Magazine of American History* 26, no. 3: 168–69), Read described with great relish a private dinner hosted by Count Nigra (a diplomat, classical scholar, and poet who had discovered a manuscript in St. Gall, Switzerland, which was the oldest example of Irish language known at the time) and included Lord Talbot de Malahide (then president of the Royal Irish Academy), after which the gentlemen retired upstairs to a room in the minister's private apartments where, spread out on a large table, were many volumes of Irish songs. These songs had been collected by an agent who worked for Count Nigra.

55. Auber was already quite elderly when Read met him; he died on 13 May 1871, during the second siege of Paris. Read recalled hearing Auber spontaneously accompany his daughter as she sang his "Jour de bonheur" ("The Spartans of Paris," *Magazine of American History* 26, no. 2: 86, 92–94). Auber served as the director of the Conservatoire from 1842 until his death, and he was revered as a composer of both comic and grand operas.

56. Read's first documented exposure to opera occurred at the tender age of eleven; see letter of 9 June 1848 (box titled *Correspondance: 1847–1849*, John Meredith Read Papers, HSP). While living in Paris, he was friendly with M. Maurice Richard, the Minister of Fine Arts, with whom he toured the "uncompleted opera-house" in Paris "before the war"—that is, before 1870 ("The Spartans of Paris," *Magazine of American History* 26, no. 3: 167–68). The Académie Nationale de Musique–Théâtre de l'Opéra would be officially inaugurated in 1876.

57. See Demar Irvine, *Massenet: A Chronicle of His Life and Times* (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1994), 161.

58. See Read's letter of 17 February 1876 to Edward L. Burlingame at Scribner and Company in New York (Box 4/13, "Copy of Private Letters of General Read, Athens, 1876," 54–56, John Meredith Read Papers, UR), in which a recent publication by Burlingame, *The Art Life and Theories of Richard Wagner*, is enthusiastically reviewed in a note following the copy of the letter.

59. Jack Winsor Hansen, in *The Sibyl Sanderson Story: Requiem for a Diva* (Pompton Plains and Cambridge: Amadeus Press, 2005), 88, recounts that the Rathbones were the in-laws of Gertrude Atherton, a close friend of Sibyl Sanderson, and they "lived on the Champs-Élysées, just a block from the Sanderson home on the rue Lincoln." Their home would also have been within walking distance of Read's home in Paris on the rue la Boëtie. According to the *Thirty-Ninth Annual Reunion of the Association of Graduates of the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York*, 12 June 1908 (Saginaw: Seemann & Peters, Printers and Binders, 1908), 97–98, Major Jared Lawrence Rathbone was born in Albany, and after graduating from Phillips Andover, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and West Point (as Second Lieutenant, in 1865), he eventually "retired" from military life and moved, in 1873, to San Francisco, where he helped to develop the Palo Alto Ranch (now the site of Stanford University) and met his future wife, Maria Alejandra Atherton. He was appointed as the U.S. consul general to Paris by President Cleveland in 1887, and served in that position for four years, after which he received a Légion d'honneur. It would have been quite natural for the retired Read to have dinner with the individual who currently served in his former diplomatic position. That they both had lived in Albany would have given them even more in common, and Read had already met Rathbone's cousin, General John Finley Rathbone, in his Albany days. In a letter of 21 July 1862, Read reported on General Rathbone's presence at his successful dinner party in Albany (box titled "Legal," John Meredith Read Papers, HSP), and his account from 1 January 1863 reported having processed next to General Rathbone at Governor Seymour's inauguration (H. F. Brown Collection, HSD). Major Rathbone's close friendship with Sibyl Sanderson through his wife (the California connection) provided yet another logical interconnection among these three Americans who found each other in Paris at the same time.

60. Various accounts have been given regarding the location of Massenet's first meeting with Sibyl Sanderson. See Hansen, *The Sibyl Sanderson Story*, 69–70. However, that their mutual introduction occurred at a dinner party in spring 1887 seems incontestable. Sibyl's father, a prominent judge on the California Supreme Court who later became the chief legal advisor to the Central and Southern Pacific Railroad Company (ibid., 5), had died the previous year, and by spring 1887, she had moved with her mother and and sisters to a large flat in Paris, where she was determined to seek her operatic fame and fortune. She tied her hopes to Massenet, who would compose *Esclarmonde* for her; it was completed on 6 July 1888 and orchestrated on 14 October 1888, just days after the dinner with Read (ibid., 82). Sanderson sang in the premiere at the Opéra-Comique on 15 May 1889, while the Exposition universelle was in full swing in Paris. "The California nightingale" was all of twenty-four years old. She would go on to sing over three hundred performances of *Manon* (ibid., 438), and Massenet would rework portions of that opera with her voice in mind. He also wrote *Thaïs* for her, which she premiered at the Opéra Garnier on 16 March 1894. Ultimately, the team of Sanderson and Massenet brought fame and fortune to both artists.

61. Hansen, *The Sibyl Sanderson Story*, 82.

62. Sanderson's meteoric career success in Europe, relentlessly fueled by Massenet, who wrote such demanding scores for her, was latently marred by inadequate vocal technique, disastrous choices in her personal life, and a gradual addiction to alcohol and morphine. She died prematurely, at the age of thirty-eight, having lost nearly everything she spent her life attaining. In spite of this, her generosity was legendary. Ironically, she befriended Mary Garden, Debussy's future Mélisande, and helped to launch her career.

63. Vidal formed a trio with Debussy and Leroux at the Villa Médici. See Henri Rebois, *Les Grandes Prix de Rome de Musique; Conférence faite à la Villa Médicis le 16 mars 1929* (Paris: Firman-Didot, 1932), 57–62, for a more detailed account of Vidal's activities in Rome.

64. *Hérodiade* (1881), *Manon* (1884), *Le Cid* (1995), and *Esclarmonde* (1889) would significantly increase Massenet's visibility as a composer.

65. Hansen, *The Sibyl Sanderson Story*, 60.

66. In a letter of 17 March 1887 to M. Ernest Hébert, director of the Villa Médici, Debussy confessed: "Now, I wonder what I will do, with my excessive shyness, to find my way and to struggle amidst this 'bazaar to success,' and I predict endless problems [and] setbacks. . . . In the end, you see, one could make Art for five people at most, and five people whom one would like very much! But to try to get the attention of the Man on the Street, worldly people, and ordinary folk, my God that must be tiresome." For the original French text, see *Claude Debussy: Correspondance (1872–1918)*, ed. François Lesure and Denis Herlin (Paris: Gallimard, 2005), 61.

67. Debussy's original compositions from 1889 to 1891 center on shorter piano pieces (such as *Petite Suite*, *Ballade slave*, *Valse romantique*, *Tarentelle styrienne*, *Suite bergamasque*, *Rêverie*, *Mazurka*, *Deux Arabesques*) and songs (such as the *Cinq poèmes de Baudelaire*, "La belle aux bois dormant," "Beau soir," and, from Verlaine, three reworked *Fêtes galantes* and the *Trois mélodies*), a few more major works such as *La damoiselle élue*, the *Fantaisie* for piano and orchestra, and the unfinished dramatic works *Axel* and *Rodrigue et Chimène*. Copies of his contracts with Choudens, with Durand, Schœnewerk & C^{ie}, and with Hamelle during this same period of time are in *Debussy: Correspondance (1872–1918)*, 69, 87–88, 89–90, 94, and 97–102.

68. It was thanks to Dupin's generosity that Debussy was able to go to Bayreuth in August 1888; there he heard *Parsifal* and *Die Meistersinger*.

69. Dietschy, in *La Passion de Claude Debussy*, 90 (in translation, *A Portrait of Claude Debussy*, 73) goes so far as to speculate (in error) that the Scottish officer who commissioned the *Marche écossaise* could have been a relative or friend of Dupin's mother, who was Scottish.

70. René Chansarel had been scheduled to perform the premiere of Debussy's *Fantaisie pour piano et orchestre* in April 1890, but Debussy withdrew from the concert when he discovered that the conductor Vincent d'Indy was planning to perform only the first of the three movements.

71. Shortly after the premiere of Debussy's *Ariettes* at the Société nationale de musique on 2 February 1890, Chausson advocated for the performance of a large work by Debussy, possibly his *Printemps* or *La damoiselle élue*, at a future concert of the Société. In February 1890, just after Debussy signed a contract with Choudens to

publish the *Marche écossaise*, Chausson hosted a private performance at his home of Debussy's *Cinq poèmes de Baudelaire*, the set of songs whose publication had been generously subsidized by Étienne Dupin.

72. Lesure, *Claude Debussy: Biographie critique*, 115–16.

73. Prince Poniatowski, *D'un Siècle à l'autre* (Paris: Presses de la Cité, 1948), 304–10.

74. In an article titled "Life in Paris" in the *New York Tribune* (10 January 1875), Baudry was cited as "one of the four great painters of the nineteenth century" (Box 11/3, 77, John Meredith Read Papers, UR).

75. Debussy referenced Baudry's portrait of Mme Vasnier in his letter to M. Vasnier at the end of November 1885. See *Debussy: Correspondance (1872–1918)*, 44–45. He also sent his condolences to M. Vasnier on the death of Baudry in 1886; letter of 29 January 1886 in ibid., 48–50.

76. By December 1885, Baudry was informed of the liaison between Marie Vasnier and Debussy by the director of the Villa Médici, M. Hébert, and his wife. Lesure, *Claude Debussy: Biographie critique*, 82.

77. See Margaret G. Cobb, "Claude Debussy to Claudius and Gustave Popelin: Nine Unpublished Letters," *19th-Century Music* 13, no. 1 (Summer 1989): 39–48.

78. See Debussy's letter to Henri Vasnier, in *Debussy: Correspondance (1872–1918)*, 36–37.

79. In an obituary for Read's wife in *The Argus* (30 May 1902), Delphine Pumpelly Read is described as "one of the most noted beauties at the court of Emperor Napoleon III, at that time the most brilliant court in Europe. The Empress was pleased on more than one occasion to speak of Mrs. Read as the American star, and this and other politenesses of the two sovereigns opened every door in Paris to Gen. and Mrs. Read."

80. Programs for two *soirées* at Minister Richard's salon, on 25 May 1870 and on 15 June 1870, are preserved in the H. F. Brown Collection, HSD. Music performed at these events included choruses by Gounod, Auber, and Gluck, and short works by Halévy, Ambroise Thomas, Reber, and Paladilhe. Hansen (*The Sibyl Sanderson Story*, 110) lists several events—at the American embassy, at the Paul Poirons', and at the De Blowitzes' on the rue Tilsitt (June 1890)—which were attended by American, English, Spanish, and Persian ambassadors. The latter event also included Massenet and the writers Simon and Claretie (one of Read's colleagues from the Spartiates group). Among Read's extensive memoirs housed at the UR are numerous summaries for his private records of receptions and dinners attended, including detailed descriptions of the physical and intellectual qualities of the individuals encountered at these events; and an enormous scrapbook, filled with calling cards from dignitaries, is conserved in the H. F. Brown Collection, HSD. Read also refers to "our salon in the Avenue d'Antin," where he and his family lived in the early 1870s (Box 3/5, "Here and There. France," packet 2, [1], John Meredith Read Papers, UR); and he mentions the salons held by Lady Lytton (Edith Villiers), the wife of his good friend, the second Lord Lytton who in 1880 became the first Earl of Lytton, at the Lytton home in the Faubourg St. Germain in 1873 (ibid., Box 3/6, 2). Surely, the Reads would have been invited to the Lytton salon, which Read describes so quaintly in "The Spartans of Paris" (*Magazine of American History* 26, no. 3, 173): "It was agreeable to find a salon of foreign origin which vied with the best specimens of indigenous growth." Read first met

Lytton in the United States in 1849, when Lytton was only eighteen years old, and began a lifelong friendship. He proposed Lytton for membership in the Spartiates in 1873 (ibid., 170–76; see also Box 3/6, 3, and Box 3/8, 46 of partial typescript numbered 31–57, John Meredith Read Papers, UR). As a highly successful poet, Lytton's *nom de plume* was Owen Meredith; his best-known work was his narrative poem *Lucille*, but he also published the *National Songs of Serbia* (1861) and *Fables in Song* (1874), and his work with folksong may have attracted Read.

81. Box 10/3, "French Country Life," 3, John Meredith Read Papers, UR. See also Box 2/16, Notebook 70, "Impressions of Greece upon King George," in which the table of contents lists songs on the battle of Kossovo [*sic*] (26), Fauriel's songs of Greece (59), and songs (also Greek popular songs) published by Émile Legrand (80). The table of contents for Notebook 87 lists an entry on Janissary music (9–12).

82. Howell was the governor and chancellor of New Jersey for seven years (1793–1801). He authored several other patriotic songs, among them the "New Jersey Blues." See Box 6, John Meredith Read Jr., "Here and There: Leaves from an Autobiography," Read Family Papers, NYSL. In a letter of 29 December 1890, Read reminisces that "it was sung by a band of young girls among whom were my relatives Miss Howell, Miss Meredith and Miss Cadwalader" (ibid. Box 12, file 18).

83. This concept was instilled in Read from early on, for in a letter to his father from 27 September 1845, Read reported that a "singing master comes to the school twice a week to teach us songs" (Box 4, Clymer–Meredith–Read Papers, NYPL). We also know that his sister Emily received piano lessons (receipts in Box 5, Clymer–Meredith–Read Papers, NYPL) as well as violin lessons (Box 2, file 4, Read Family Papers, NYSL), and that he sent his daughter Emily to a school near Paris where "she learns Music, to say nothing of the essential reading and writing" (letter of 27 December 1869 in box titled *Correspondence, 1860–1869, 1870–1873*, folder "Correspondence, 1870–1873," John Meredith Read Papers, HSP). Nevertheless, the available documents suggest that Read's own understanding and appreciation of music were superficial, compared with his knowledge of painting and certainly of literature.

84. As first minister and then *chargé d'affaires* in Athens, Read had served Greece and American interests in that country for four full years. During that time, he had assisted in obtaining the release of the U.S. ship *America*, had helped to open America's grain trade with Russia, and had lobbied to revoke the Greek government's decree prohibiting the sale of the Bible in Greece (Box 8, Read Family Papers, LC). Letters from 27 July, 30 March, and 25 April 1878 (Box 12, files 13 and 15, Read Family Papers, NYSL) show that he lobbied hard from March to June 1878 to preserve the legation, which was being criticized in Congress, in part because the Democratic majority considered Read an "aristocrat, and therefore unfit to represent a republic" (letter to Alexandra, Princess of Wales, from 13 October 1879, Box 2, file 17, Read Family Papers, NYSL). Though clearly disappointed by the U.S. government's decision to terminate funding for its diplomatic legation in Greece, letters from 22 April 1876 and 6 May 1876 express Read's disbelief that the legation will be suspended ("VII. Copy of Private Letters of General Read, Athens, 1876," H. F. Brown Collection, HSD) and letters from 10, 12, and 13 June 1878 discuss the actual decision (Box 12, file 15, Read Family Papers, NYSL). By June 1878, Read chose to remain in Greece at his own expense for an additional year. Letters from Read to King George on 5 February and 5 March 1880 pressure the king for some "official" recognition of his service to Greece.

King George responded in November 1881 by awarding Read the Grand Cross of the Royal Order of the Redeemer, an event that was reported in the *Morning Post* (presumably a paper in Albany) on 11 November 1881 (Box 11/1, "Harmon P. Read. Albany." Notebook, [13], John Meredith Read Papers, UR). Read was clearly thrilled by this honor; a photo of him in full regalia, as well as photos of the actual grand cross, may be viewed in H. P. Read, *Rossiana*, page facing 306, and 309. Incidentally, earlier that year, in July 1881, following an operatic performance at Aix-les-Bains, King George had also decorated Sibyl Sanderson with the medal of St. George (Hansen, *The Sibyl Sanderson Story*, 144). By the time they had dinner together in October 1888, both Read and Sanderson had received official honors from the same king of Greece.

85. The work was ceded to Choudens in a contract dated 15 January 1891. Lesure, *Claude Debussy: Biographie critique*, 121.

86. All translations in this study are by the author.

87. Read wrote, "At an early period the leading characteristics of the three principal cities in America were set forth in the following proverbial manner: In Boston they ask, What do you know? In New York, How much money have you? In Philadelphia, Who was your grandfather? In Philadelphia, money was valued as it is in Europe, because it aids representation and contributes to the well-being of families. But in Philadelphia, unaccompanied by birth or breeding, it was useless as far as social standing and recognition are concerned." As a conservative Philadelphia blue-blood, Read's personal identification in this matter was clear. See Box 3/2, "General Meredith Read's English Recollections," 2, John Meredith Read Papers, UR.

88. When Emily Meredith Read (born in Albany) married Francis Aquila Stout (from New York City) in an Episcopalian ceremony in Newport, Rhode Island, on 21 August 1884, the *New York Tribune* reported the next day that around five thousand invitations had been sent, but also added, rather snidely, that most of the royalty who were invited declined the invitation, as did President Arthur the day before the wedding (Box 11/3, 96, John Meredith Read Papers, UR). Upon the death of Stout, who was thirty years older than Emily, Read penned a detailed and lovingly sympathetic obituary of his son-in-law. See General John Meredith Read, "Francis Aquila Stout: A Study," in Ehrman Syme Nadal, John Meredith Read, and Henry Clay Taylor, *Francis Aquila Stout* (New York: DeVinne Press, 1894).

89. Read cites his connection to the 6th Earl of Ross in his letter to J. Read Cabral in Portugal, from 12 July 1875 (see untitled green leather volume of letters, H. F. Brown Collection, HSD).

90. The Welsh family of Meredith can be traced back to the Mirdites of Merdita in the fourth or fifth centuries. According to lore, "on the morning of the battle of Kossova [*sic*], Sultan Amurath meeting the Chief of their tribe, who had brought an auxiliary force to their assistance, was saluted by him with the words *mire dite* ('good day' in Albanian); and that in consequence of this, when the battle was over, and he undertook to guarantee the rights of his valiant allies, he gave them the name of Mirdites, in commemoration of the word of good omen which he had heard in the morning." For related information, see Box 7/1, Notebooks 31, 48, and 50, John Meredith Read Papers, UR.

91. Anyone interested in greater details regarding the Ross–Read–Meredith/Clymer/Carpenter–Morris family genealogies is invited to contact the author at the Eastman

School of Music, Rochester, New York. The information in the chart in figure 3 is the result of considerable genealogical research, and represents the author's best understanding of the data, which is sometimes conflicting among sources. Secondary sources consulted for the information in the following paragraphs and for figure 3 include H. P. Read, *Rossiana*; William Thompson Read, *Life and Correspondence of George Read* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippencott, 1870); Edward Carpenter and Louis Henry Carpenter, *Samuel Carpenter and His Descendants* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1912); Cuyler Reynolds, *Hudson-Mohawk Genealogical and Family Memoirs*, vol. 2 (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1911); Compton Reade, *A Record of the Redes of Baron Court, Berks*; Rev. Charles A. Goodrich, *Lives of the Signers to the Declaration of Independence* (New York: Thomas Mather and David M. Javett, 1830); Robert G. Ferris, series ed., *National Survey of Historic Sights and Buildings*, vol. 18: *Signers of the Declaration* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1973); Paul Scudiere, *New York's Signers of the Declaration of Independence* (Albany: New York State American Revolution Bicentennial Commission, 1975), and the Colonial Hall web site (http://colonialhall.com/index_t1.php).

92. Initially, both Read and Morris argued for maintaining loyalty to England, but they were ultimately convinced that signing the Declaration of Independence was the right course of action; this is mentioned in numerous sources, but for one example, see Box 6, Read's "Here and There," Read Family Papers, NYSL.

93. Gouverneur Morris was the son of Lewis Morris Jr. and his second wife, Sarah Gouverneur, and Lewis Morris, the signer (technically Lewis Morris III) was the son of Lewis Morris Jr. and his first wife, Katrintja Staats.

94. George Ross was the son of Rev. George Ross and his second wife, Anna Catherine van Gezel, and Rev. Aeneas Ross was the son of the same Rev. George Ross and his first wife, Johanna Williams.

95. For more information, see http://terry-l-linton.com/BIRD_Family_Facts.html.

96. Ibid. The information on the circumstances surrounding the creation of the first American flag is taken from an affidavit signed by Rachel Fletcher, Betsy Griscom Ross Claypoole's daughter, on 31 July 1871.

97. Ibid.

98. John Read graduated with an AB from the College of New Jersey (which later became Princeton) in 1787, and was admitted to the bar in 1791. His son John Meredith received his AB from the University of Pennsylvania, an LLD from Brown, and was admitted to the bar in 1818. Interestingly, John Meredith Read Jr. notes in his essay, "Here and There," that the name of Read in the Saxon tongue means "Advise" or "Counsel" (Box 6, Read Family Papers, NYSL); how appropriate, then, that four generations of American Reads were trained as lawyers.

99. This information is repeated in many sources; for one example, see typescript of Read's biography that was prepared for *Men and Women of the Time* (February 1894) but never published (Box 4/4, 1, John Meredith Read Papers, UR). In a letter from Read to his father, dated 20 February 1860, he ponders the choice of running for president or "vice" (Box 2, file 14, Read Family Papers, NYSL).

100. The biographical information on John Meredith Read Jr. related here is drawn from a six-page typescript; a three-page sketch from *Galignani's Messenger*; a five-page

typescript of Read's biography that was prepared for *Men and Women of the Time* (February 1894) but never published; and a three-page typescript for *Who's Who* (dated 25 September 1896), all in Box 4/4, John Meredith Read Papers, UR, as well as from many of the sources listed in n91.

101. Almira Woods was Priscilla Read's sister, and she was married to Dr. Alva Woods, a clergyman and professor at Brown University. Mrs. Woods wrote to Read's father on 11 June 1841, inviting him to bring his two children to Providence the following week. See box titled *Correspondence, 1840–1849*, folder "Correspondence, 1840–1846," John Meredith Read Papers, HSP.

102. Emily Meredith Read wrote a letter to their father on 20 August 1847 in which she describes her little brother "Johnny" as "an insatiable reader" (box titled *Correspondence, 1840–1849*, folder "Correspondence, 1847–1849," John Meredith Read Papers, HSP). Mrs. Woods reported that Johnny loved "reading history," in addition to riding his pony and swimming every day, in a letter dated 18 August [1851] (box titled *Correspondence, 1850–1859*, folder "Correspondence, 1850–1851," John Meredith Read Papers, HSP).

103. See Read's letter to his father, 25 January 1848, in box titled *Correspondence, 1840–1849*, folder "Correspondence, 1847–1849," John Meredith Read Papers, HSP. Read would not have passed a physical for any armed services; his thumb was nearly severed in 1851 when a powder flask exploded in his hand. Read's father reported this incident immediately to his grandfather in a letter on 23 February 1851, and Johnny followed up with letters to his grandfather, written with his left hand, on 10 April 1851 and 31 April 1851 (Box 2, Clymer–Meredith–Read Papers, NYPL). In the 1890s, this disability made it difficult for him to write by hand; he alludes to this condition in letters from 20 and 30 March, 2 June, and 26 July 1894, and from 18 June and 3 December 1895 (Box 12, item 21, Read Family Papers, NYSL).

104. Read's letter to Colonel A. K. McClure on 11 September 1862 mentioned his urging the governor to provide "fully equipped vehicles of war" as well as a "U.S. commander from Washington to command here" (Box 9, folder 7, Archives and Special Collections, MC 2003.4, Waidner-Spahr Library, Dickinson College).

105. Two large letter copy-books from 1861 (Box 11, Read Family Papers, NYSL) are filled with orders from Read to move troops, equip them with provisions, and the like.

106. Letter from John Meredith Read Jr. to H. S. H. Prince Louis de Battenberg, dated 4 July 1887 (Box 4/12, "Royal Letters," 2, John Meredith Read Papers, UR).

107. Box 12, file 13, Read Family Papers, NYSL. Read put it perhaps even more aptly in his explanation to William H. Appleton on 6 July 1875, following the death of his father: "I removed to Albany N. Y. in order to work out my own salvation, without recourse to his influence." Nevertheless, Read would rely on periodic cash allowances from his father even while he was living in Albany (see Box 8, Read Family Papers, LC). Such allowances and loans from both his father and his father-in-law continued while he was serving abroad in his diplomatic roles; see, for example, letters between Read and his father from 2 September 1870 (Box 2, item 14, Read Family Papers, NYSL), those from 13 and 25 June, and 6 September 1873 (ibid., Box 13, file 45), and from 17 and 24 October 1873 (ibid., Box 13, file 48), as well as a letter from Harmon Pumpelly to Read's father, dated 17 November 1870 (ibid., Box 2, item 9). Read must have received a sizable inheritance when his father died in 1874, finally easing his

financial burdens. Nonetheless, Read clearly spared little expense in his ministerial lifestyle; in a letter to Grant from 25 April 1878, advocating for retention of the legation in Greece, Read blurted out, "I have spent $75,000 or $80,000 more than I have received from the Government in the endeavor to represent our country in a decent manner." See Box 12, item 15, Read Family Papers, NYSL.

108. From January 1869, a number of friends wrote to the president-elect and to the secretary of state on behalf of Read, urging them to consider him for a ministerial appointment. Read's own father wrote to E. B. Washburne, Secretary of State for a brief time and then Minister to France, on 13 January 1869, requesting a mission for his son (Box 6, Read Family Papers, LC).

109. Read letter to Harmon Pumpelly Read, dated 24 May 1877 (Box 11, file 10, Read Family Papers, NYSL). After his father died, Read seems to have dropped the "Jr." after his name, consistently using the title of General with the family names of Meredith and Read.

110. Copy of typewritten letter is preserved in Box 2, file 18, Read Family Papers, NYSL.

111. The actual inauguration day of Cornell University occurred on 8 October 1868. See letters of 7 August and 9 October 1868 (Box 2, item 14, Read Family Papers, NYSL).

112. An enormous volume titled *Archives of General Meredith Read / Clubs and Societies* resides in the H. F. Brown Collection, HSD. Historian Philip M. Katz, in an unpublished paper, "Our Man in Paris: John Meredith Read, Jr., and the Discontents of American Republicanism, 1860–1896," posits that, in all, Read "became a member of nearly two-dozen learned societies." Read was also a member of the Masons, attaining the 32nd degree in America and the 33rd degree in Greece (H. P. Read, *Rossiana*, 307). His father was a Grand Master of the Masons in Philadelphia (ibid., 302, 311), and his son Harmon Pumpelly Read also reached the 32nd degree (ibid., 310–11).

113. In a diary entry from 1869, Read expresses his admiration for Paris, stating that it "is the most cosmopolitan city in the world and it is only by leaving it and returning to it after a short period that one can realize how immeasurably it is above every other metropolis in the amusements it offers and in the constant changes it presents" (Box 7, diary with locked clasp, Read Family Papers, NYSL).

114. This precious letter is preserved on p. 215 of Box 12, item 18, Read Family Papers, NYSL.

115. Lesure and Herlin posit that Debussy moved back to his parents' home by February 1891 in *Debussy: Correspondance (1872–1918)*, 90n1 and 95–97.

116. My thanks to Denis Herlin, who suggested this plausible conjecture (personal communication, 11 March 2012).

117. In 1924, Erik Satie echoed this phrase when he wrote "L'origine des Satie remonte, peut-être, aux temps les plus reculés." See Erik Satie's account, "Recoins de ma vie: L'origine des Satie," as the last section of his "Mémoires d'un amnésique," *Les Feuilles libres* 6, no. 35 (January–February 1924): 329. I am grateful to Robert Orledge for pointing out this fascinating connection (personal communication, 5 March 2012).

118. The real "Earl of Ross March," an older and more famous tune composed by Donald Mor MacCrimmon around 1600, was not chosen for Debussy's commission. Although several versions of "The Earl of Ross March" have survived through the ages, the basic tune, given in relatively modern notation, may be viewed at http://www.electricscotland.com/WEBCLANS/ntor/ross6.htm; and a masterful performance of it by Roddy MacLeod, at the Glenfiddich Piping Championship, may be heard and seen at http://video.stv.tv/bc/scotland-piping-20081025-piobaireachd-roddy-macleod-performance/. Readers interested in further performances by Mr. MacLeod are encouraged to consult his web site at http://www.roddymacleodpiobaireachd.com/n/downloads?p=5.

119. Box 12, item 13, Read Family Papers, NYSL.

120. Read letter to Francis Nevile Reid, dated 16 February 1892 (Box 12, item 19, 77, Read Family Papers, NYSL).

121. Ibid., 77–78.

122. Ibid., 47.

123. Special thanks to Roddy MacLeod, MBE, Principal, National Piping Centre, Scotland, for identifying the tune of Debussy's *Marche*, and to Oona Ivory and Roy Howat for connecting me to Mr. MacLeod. I am also grateful to James Farrington of the Sibley Music Library, Rochester, New York; Joseph Bartl from the Bibliographic Access section of the Music Division of the Library of Congress, Washington, DC; and Natalie Meggison from the Library at Heritage College, Gatineau, QC, Canada, for their help in this search. Last but not least, the author is grateful for the input from the many individuals who replied to her query on the bagpipers forum, http://forums.bobdunsire.com/forums/showthread.php?=1073694#post1073694.

124. Donald MacPhee (1841–80) was an outstanding piper and maker of bagpipes who maintained a successful business at 12 Royal Arcade in Glasgow; for further information on MacPhee, including photos of his bagpipes, see http://www.thebagpipeplace.com/museum/page118.html. His collection has been reprinted numerous times since 1876 and 1879. Interestingly, the tune of "Meggerny Castle" is not found in *Ross's Collection [of] Pipe Music* (1st ed., 1869; new ed., 1876; rev. ed., 1885). It is entirely plausible, however, that Read would have been keenly attracted to a collection of tunes whose title bore the name of his ancestors.

125. The plate number "A. C. 8539" appears at the bottom of each of the sixteen pages (numbered 2–17) of the score. The Parisian printer "E. Dupré, rue du Delta 26" is acknowledged on the last page of the music. Debussy inscribed a copy of this Choudens edition to Erik Satie, whose maternal grandmother, Elsie Davidson, was Scottish, from the clan of Leslie; see Erik Satie, *Correspondance presque complète*, ed. Ornella Volta (Paris: Fayard/IMEC, 2000), 788 and 920. According to Robert Orledge (personal communication, 5 March 2012), the actual inscription, written in ink on the top right corner of the title page, is "à Erick [*sic*] Satie. / toujours en bois. / Cl. A. Debussy [18]92." Considering Debussy's signature and his misspelling of Satie's first name, Orledge deduces that this score was given to Satie before the fall of 1892. He also believes that the "homme en bois" was a private joke between the two composers, citing several subsequent references that allude to this image of a "blockhead." See Robert Orledge, "Debussy, Satie, and the Summer of 1913," *Cahiers Debussy* 26 (2002): 31–44, esp. 35–36.

126. The plate number "E. 1410 F." appears at the bottom of each of the thirty-three pages (numbered 1–33) of the orchestral score. However, the publisher "Paris, Jean JOBERT, Editeur, 44, rue du Colisée" is given at the bottom left on the first page of the score and "L. Parent graveur" and "Imp. Delanchy- Dupré, Asnières, Seine" are recorded at the bottom left and right, respectively, on the last page of the music. In this instance, Jobert was reissuing old Fromont plates; Jean Jobert took over the firm of Eugène Fromont in 1922. See Denis Herlin, "Sirens in the Labyrinth," in *Debussy Studies*, ed. Richard Langham Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 52n5.

127. In other words, the title of the Jobert publication was *Scottish March on a Folk Theme*, rather than the original Choudens title, *March of the Ancient Earls of Ross*. It is possible that Debussy had the new title in mind well before 1911. A single-page autograph manuscript, consisting of sixteen measures of the piece (both the "a" and the "b" sections of the theme) and now conserved in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des Arts du spectacle (Collection Rondel, Fol–M Ro–16), is labeled as the "Marche des Anciens Comtes de Ross. (Thème populaire Ecossais—harmonisé par C. A. Debussy)." The composer presumably gave this little manuscript to Satie, who copied out the title on the verso as the "Marche des Anciens comtes de Ross / Thème populaire Ecossais harmonisé par Claude A. Debussy." Robert Orledge believes that Debussy's signature at the end of the musical notation dates from early 1894, certainly long before the release of the Jobert orchestral version, when the work was published as a *Scottish March on a Folk Theme* (personal communication, 5 March 2012). I am indebted to colleagues Denis Herlin and Edmond Lemaître for sharing information on the manuscript, a facsimile of which may be seen as lot 59 in the Piasa catalog, Hôtel Drouot (3 December 2002), 24–25.

128. The plate number for this edition was "E. 1407. F." and was later reissued by Jobert, with the same plate numbers intact. The original Fromont print lists "Paris, E. Fromont, Editeur," and "B^{d}. Malesherbes. (40, R. d'Anjou)" on the bottom left and right, respectively, of the first page of the score (numbered 2), and "Paris Imp: Dupré" at the bottom right of the last page of score (numbered 17). In contrast, the Jobert prints list "Paris, Jean JOBERT, Editeur, 44, rue du Colisée" on the bottom left of p. 2 and "Imp. A. Mounot, Paris" on the bottom right of p. 17. Both prints retain a common element that is not often seen in Debussy publications: discreet advertisements for other Debussy compositions appear at the bottom left of the recto side of each page of the score.

129. I am grateful to piper Anne Marie de Zeeuw, Professor of Music Theory at the University of Louisville, for confirming this information.

130. *Debussy: Correspondance (1872–1918)*, 133.

131. See the exchange of letters between Chausson and Debussy from 4 June 1893 through 8 June 1893 in *Debussy: Correspondance (1872–1918)*, 135–37.

132. Debussy, letters from 22 and 29 May 1894, in *Debussy: Correspondance (1872–1918)*, 206–7.

133. *Debussy: Correspondance (1872–1918)*, 326. Debussy had briefly mentioned the work in a letter to Vincent d'Indy in February 1895 (ibid., 244), but it was in the context of yet another eluded opportunity for a performance.

134. *Debussy: Correspondance (1872–1918)*, 333. In this letter, Debussy added that the piece was hardly worth the trouble. One has to wonder if the composer was perhaps actually embracing all of the mishaps, consciously or unconsciously facilitating the "good excuses" not to perform his work. This speculation is later dashed, if we take seriously Debussy's later comments on the work (in 1913).

135. See letters from Debussy, to M. du Motet on 26 September 1907 (*Debussy: Correspondance (1872–1918)*, 1033), and to Colonne on 19 November 1908 (ibid., 1133), where he writes of the *Marche*, "I am not at all attached to the *Marche écossaise* . . . It is a commissioned work from my youth, which should have been played ten years ago; it's too late now to talk about it."

136. See D.-E. Inghelbrecht, *Mouvement contraire* (Paris: Éditions Domat, 1947), 184; and Germaine and D. E. Inghelbrecht, *Debussy*, 229–30.

137. Inghelbrecht would conduct the *Marche* in concerts on 19 April and 22 October of 1913. The conductor owned Debussy's sketch of the opening of the work for piano, four hands. For a facsimile of this manuscript, see Inghelbrecht, *Mouvement contraire*, page facing 318; and André Gauthier, *Debussy: Documents iconographiques* (Genève: Pierre Cailler, 1952), no. 32.

138. Debussy wrote to Emma on 27 February 1914 following a rehearsal with the orchestra, expressing his hopes that the *Marche écossaise* would go better the following day. See *Debussy: Correspondance (1872–1918)*, 1774–75.

Camp in Francis Poulenc's Early Ballets

Christopher Moore

Qui dira jamais le secret de certaines oeuvres?[1]

"As he's always been rather *le cher maître* in my eyes, I was chilled by his talk of sexual success."[2] With these surprising words, Ned Rorem reacted to a friendly conversation with Francis Poulenc in the spring of 1954, during which time the French composer was deeply immersed in work on his opera *Dialogues des Carmélites*. That Rorem, a homosexual whose writings habitually revel in the details of intimate self-exposure, registered a cold *frisson* upon hearing of Poulenc's gay sexual exploits seems almost hypocritically prudish. Yet for the American composer, Poulenc's purported promiscuity did not easily reconcile itself with the romanticized notion of the "dear master." Clearly, the subject of sex, even at a casual gathering of friends at a Cannes hotel, was something about which Rorem would have preferred Poulenc to remain silent.[3]

He was not alone. Following Poulenc's death in 1963, most scholars adopted a "no-tell" attitude regarding the composer's sexuality. Hélène de Wendel's edition of a selection of Poulenc's letters, published in 1967, carefully expunged any mention of the composer's intimate relationships.[4] References to Poulenc's unsuccessful marriage proposal to childhood friend Raymonde Linossier; his decisive and anxiety-ridden gay affair with Richard Chanlaire; the mysterious circumstances surrounding the birth of his daughter, Marie-Ange; and his passionate relationship with salesman Lucien Roubert, were all excised from Wendel's publication. Though Darius Milhaud, in his preface to the volume, commented on how these letters, "like pages detached from an intimate diary, reveal the very heart of Francis—his kindness, his concern and also his creative angst," the epistolary portrait provided by Wendel, a friend of the composer, was heavily censored with the aim of removing any reference to the composer's sexual life.[5]

The publication in 1994 of Myriam Chimènes's much more complete edition of Poulenc's correspondence was in this regard significant

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in that it functioned as a posthumous "outing" of the composer, one that revealed that Rorem's "dear master" was far more influenced by gay desire than earlier musicological portraits could have ever imagined.[6] Indeed, Chimènes's volume not only rendered the composer's sexual identity a matter of public record, it also revealed the myriad imbrications between Poulenc's private life and the creative world of his music.[7] Although Chimènes alluded to Poulenc's "affective tendencies" in her introductory article to the *Correspondance*, it is the content of specific letters that exposed both the composer's homosexuality and the central place it held within his social and creative universe.

Somewhat surprisingly, however, these letters did not immediately lead to a focused examination of how Poulenc's music was shaped by his homosexuality, despite the intense interest in matters relating to gender and sexuality that have marked musicological inquiry over the past twenty years. Certainly, in France, where such questions have traditionally been marginalized, research on Poulenc has generally disregarded the presence of homosexual resonances in the composer's music.[8] Indeed, since the 1950s, the discourse shaping Poulenc's legacy has been informed by Claude Rostand's description of the composer as embodying the contrasting traits of the "monk" (*moine*) and the "bad boy" (*voyou*).[9] As Richard Burton notes in his biography of the composer, Rostand's cliché "set the terms that have dominated critical discussion of the composer's music to this day," effectively focusing musicological inquiry on Poulenc's "Janus-faced" strategy of drawing on both profane and sacred muses throughout his musical oeuvre.[10] Developments in recent scholarship, among which Burton's biography figures prominently, suggest that the terms of engagement with the composer's artistic contribution are mutating. Recent investigations into the relationship of Poulenc's sexuality to his religious beliefs, the role of eroticism and sexual ambiguity within his aesthetic universe, or the way in which his music more generally articulates a "queer sensibility" challenge Rostand's binary stereotype while asserting the centrality of the composer's sexual identity to his oeuvre.[11]

When Poulenc fell in love with Richard Chanlaire in the late 1920s, he wrote to the artist Valentine Hugo to tell her that he had been "happy to confide to you my big secret, my serious secret."[12] In this letter, he refers to the "anguish," but also the "abnormality" (*anomalie*) of his love, and promises to follow through on Hugo's advice that the two men leave for Venice.[13] Though Paris was the center of a thriving homosexual subculture during the interwar period, the fear of disgrace, harassment, and imprisonment inevitably shaped the wide-ranging discourses of queer cultural activity at this time.[14] Though same-sex

sexual relationships were legal according to the Code Napoleon, the police nonethless compensated for this legality by seeking to expose and thereby dissuade homosexual behavior. As Laure Murat has argued, the very legality of homosexuality in France paradoxically undermined the formation of advocacy organizations for the simple reason that French homosexuals had no legal motivation to organize themselves. These factors encouraged French homosexuals toward a heightened form of "discretion," what Murat describes as "the obligatory dissimulation of a sexual orientation which, though authorized, was compelled to remain shameful and hidden, fearing the light of day."[15] Such fears were not solely provoked by the police. Homophobic prejudice was endemic to society and was expressed along with xenophobic sentiments that construed homosexuality as a "German vice." After the First World War, homosexuality was also seen to undermine the patriotic duty of the French to repopulate the country in the wake of the massive losses in the trenches.[16]

The artistic world was hardly immune to such prejudice, and by referring to his homosexuality as a "big secret," Poulenc reveals his indebtedness to similar strategies of discretion and dissimulation. Though the composer did confide to select friends about his sex life, thus rendering his homosexuality an "open secret," his immediate social circle and first biographers were also protective of his reputation and they, like Poulenc himself, carefully dissimulated the reality of his sexual identity throughout the broader public sphere. This is not to say that Poulenc entirely erased all signs of his queer sexuality from the expressive fabric of his works. Indeed, Poulenc's use of a network of rhetorical and stylistic devices that simultaneously conceal and creatively exploit the secret of his sexual identity reflects the composer's profound engagement with the queer cultural practices of camp.[17]

The evolution of camp aesthetics throughout the twentieth century, and especially its broad and frequently confusing use within popular culture during the last fifty years, has served to obscure camp's origins as a specifically queer practice.[18] In the reading of Poulenc's ballets *Les Biches* and *Aubade* that follows, camp is historically situated as a practice whose expressive forms evolved from within the constraints of the closet and were cultivated in reaction to the oppression, silencing, and marginalization of gay desire.[19] Simply put, the strategies sustaining camp aesthetics allowed gay men to create work that was produced under circumstances where it might have been hazardous to be named as gay. As Matthew Tinkcom has proposed, in order to avoid denunciation and disgrace, as well as to safely relegate the expression of queer identity to the closet, artistic productions predicated upon camp were

frequently structured around a creative "alibi."[20] Such an alibi constitutes a legitimate defense that deflects speculation about whether an individual has perpetrated a crime or, when viewed within the context of artistic creativity and homophobic oppression, whether a work has been conceived by a queer artist or to express a subjective point of view based on queer experience.[21] Thus, though camp is indeed a "deviant" form of expression, it largely expresses itself within the folds of dominant and heterosexual artistic discourses. By articulating itself within established modes of artistic representation, camp functioned as an "unseen queer culture," one that was communicated through codes and specialized knowledge based in shared experiences and anxiously concealed sexual practices. As Stevan Cohan writes, "The cultural conundrum of seeing/not seeing queerness was the stuff of camp," and indeed, for camp to be an effective agent for the communication of queer expression, it depended on "straight audiences missing the point or refusing to hear or see beyond what common sense dictated."[22] As such, camp draws its creative and social force by implicitly challenging the very underpinnings of straight discourse through the adoption of an ironic attitude that undermines the perceived "normality" of the sexual binaries that buttress heterocentricity. As a result, humor certainly emerges as a recurrent strategy within camp in the way it ironically engages with the strict regulation of heteronormativity within society at large. Yet, as Cohan reminds, camp need not always be humorous; its ironic stance may also be "deadly serious, a mode of critiquing or at least disturbing the circuits through which cultural values maintain the stability of a rigorously heterosexualized world."[23] Indeed, while camp production undoubtedly grew more politicized and deliberately ironic in the post-Stonewall environment, earlier artistic works, such as those by Poulenc, emanate less from a desire to topple social mores than from a deep inner need to express, even at a subconscious level, the realities of his socially fraught sexual identity.

By viewing camp as a strategy intrinsically linked to the social technique of "passing," my usage differs in important respects from Susan Sontag's well-known, if controversial, examination of the subject. In her "Notes on Camp," Sontag described camp as a "mode of aestheticism" that values artifice, obsolescence, epicenity, and extravagance.[24] For her, gays "constitute the vanguard" of camp taste, but she also claims that though camp may represent "a certain aspect of the situation of homosexuals . . . it is not true that camp taste *is* homosexual taste."[25] Ultimately, Sontag views camp primarily as an aesthetic orientation, one she analyzes without acknowledging or examining how its distinctive aesthetic products were engendered and maintained within the gay

community. But despite the fact that Sontag's "Notes" obscure the reality of camp's origins and historical development, many of the aesthetic attributes she describes may be profitably employed to describe Poulenc's music. As Aloys Mooser wrote in 1953, "Francis Poulenc works with old new things, with reiterations, with clichés, all of which he exploits with a kind of shamelessness that borders on recklessness."[26] The composer's tonal obsolescence, his pronounced taste for what he called "adorable bad music," his earnest approach to the representation of frivolity, and the general autobiographical theatricalization of experience apparent in his works are all attributes identified in Sontag's study as typical of camp aesthetics.[27]

An examination of Poulenc's use of camp not only serves to reinforce the myriad links between the composer's sexual identity and the expressive texture of his works. It also allows us to refine our understanding of the composer's attraction to important modernist trends, such as neoclassicism and surrealism, which as a result of their syntactical and semantic ambiguity were particularly effective vehicles for a composer who sought to hide his "big secret" from public view. By frequently using music from both his own compositions and those of others, by engaging in musical thefts that Daniel Albright has called "so gross they seem more like outright robbery than theft by stealth," Poulenc's music tends to frustrate attempts to interpret specific stylistic or thematic gestures as moments of clear autobiographical disclosure.[28] Obviously, any reading of Poulenc's works that aims to salvage the hidden vestiges of homosexual desire, denial, and disgrace from within the complex codes of musical and theatrical representation must naturally be attentive to such crimes. After all, the act of musically being an "other," with all of its underlying techniques of theatrical dissimulation, resonates strongly with the gay need to "pass" in a closeted environment.

Poulenc's musical and dramatic disguises periodically draw undue attention to their own incongruity. Indeed, there are moments in the composer's works when his elaborate musical makeup cannot entirely hide the expressive reality of the queer subjectivity it is attempting to cover up. Such moments of "failed seriousness" are apparent in Poulenc's music during instances of particularly acute emotional abandon, when the intensity of the expressive register actually *undermines* theatricality and, paradoxically, points to an underlying and irrepressible authenticity.[29] Jean Cocteau, writing long before "camp" emerged as a cultural buzzword, succinctly described these particular moments as "lies that tell the truth."[30] Poulenc, who arguably remained in Cocteau's aesthetic debt throughout his entire career, discovered his own voice by exploiting the tensions between lies and truths, and

between the related aesthetic registers of theatricality and authenticity. Ultimately, if we recognize the function of alibis as part of a ploy animating a broader strategy of personal concealment, Poulenc's works, and the early ballets in particular, acutely reveal the intimate challenges posed by the composer's liminal sexuality.

Dressing Up to Laugh

Poulenc loved costume parties. They appealed to him not only because they fulfilled his "distinct taste for socializing," but also because they provided him with ample opportunities to camp within a culturally select and sexually permissive milieu.[31] At times, his party behavior could be quite outrageous. At a soirée organized by Valentine Hugo, the composer treated the assembled guests to a dance in his pajamas that ultimately escalated into a striptease when his pants ended up on the floor. Cocteau later reminisced: "Poulenc completely naked—Valentine dying of fear that her maid would be scandalized—Poulenc as comfortable as if he were wearing a monk's cowl."[32] The composer was not always so exhibitionistic, but his party antics did typically revolve around sexual play and ambiguity, including ostentatious displays of cross-dressing.[33] For one party, hosted by a certain Madame Cardinal, Poulenc showed up disguised as Chéri, the eponymous character of Colette's 1920 novel.[34] The first chapter of Colette's book is set in the boudoir of a demimondaine named Léa, and it is in this setting that Chéri's sexual ambiguity and his attraction to ostentatious luxury are revealed. The reader first discovers Chéri in a rather incongruous pose: clothed in silk pajamas and Turkish slippers, he admires himself in a mirror, enraptured at the vision of his beguiling physique and the heavy pearl necklace that adorns it.[35] Once described by Ned Rorem as "a cross between weasel and trumpet," Poulenc's physiognomy would have made him an unconvincing Chéri.[36] But the cross-dressing gesture nonethless reflects his propensity to express his socially fraught orientation through the aesthetic world of camp. Norem remarked elsewhere that Colette's *Chéri* would have made an "ideal" opera libretto for Poulenc.[37] Like Chéri, who modeled his tastes and behavior after those of Léa, the aging courtesan who had spoiled him since youth, Poulenc regularly acknowledged his indebtedness and attraction to strong female figures. The most important of these was his mother, who had nurtured in him a precocious fondness for the music of Grieg, Rubinstein, and Tchaikovsky and was one of the primary influences on the entire "bad-boy" side of his music.[38] But Poulenc also self-identified with the female heroines he created in his works. Like Gustave Flaubert's Madame Bovary, Blanche

from *Dialogues des Carmélites*, or Elle from *La Voix humaine* were viewed by Poulenc as epicene extensions of his innermost "moi."[39] Such examples of physical and psychological cross-dressing all ally Poulenc to the gender-bending world of drag, camp's preeminent mode of expression.[40]

Parties and cross-dressing emerge as a major theme in Poulenc's ballet *Les Biches*, first performed by the Ballets Russes at Monte Carlo in January 1924 with choreography by Bronislava Nijinska and costumes by Marie Laurencin.[41] Diaghilev first contacted Poulenc about the project in November 1921, enticed by the idea that the young composer would compose music for a ballet scenario with cantata titled *Les Demoiselles* written by the fashion designer Germaine Bongard.[42] In July 1922, Poulenc learned that Bongard was no longer willing to part with her scenario and he wrote to his friend Darius Milhaud to announce that he would now "probably write a suite of dances without a libretto."[43] Although the published score confirms that prediction, it is likely that Bongard's scenario continued to influence Poulenc throughout his compositional work on *Les Biches*. Poulenc's ballet not only affirmed Bongard's "demoiselle" theme by featuring a corps de ballet composed of flirtatious young woman, it also retained her ballet-cantata formula through the integration of three movements that feature choral singing from the pit in a manner reminiscent of Stravinsky's *Pulcinella*. Apart from the orchestration, over which Poulenc would tinker until the late 1930s, the bulk of the compositional work was completed by the summer of 1923.[44] In November of that year, Poulenc went to Monte Carlo on Diaghilev's orders to "survey the choreography."[45] Writing to Milhaud, Poulenc described Najinska's conception as "ravishing" and praised her for "having truly understood my music."[46] In the two months leading up to the premiere, Poulenc and Nijinska oversaw "at least 72 rehearsals or close to 250 hours of work" and it was undoubtedly during this largely undocumented period of their collaboration that the ballet's loose narrative structure took its final form.[47]

Set in a drawing room that is unfurnished apart from a large blue sofa, *Les Biches* is made up of an overture and a succession of eight tableaux depicting various scenes of coquetry and seduction.[48] As the critic Henry Malherbe wrote of the Parisian premiere, in Poulenc's ballet "atmosphere replaces action" and the lack of a clear scenario allowed the composer to propose a ballet that "doesn't express anything precise and logical, other than a succession of characters that are pleasing to watch."[49] Critic Raoul Brunel described *Les Biches* as "a choregraphic fantasy whose meaning is not very clear."[50] Lydia Sokolova, one of the dancers at the premiere, remembered: "There was no story to *Les Biches*—it was far too chic to have anything so obvious."[51]

The first movement, "Rondeau" features the corps de ballet, which critic Louis Laloy described as "these young girls in pink, pink like peach tree flowers, who abandon a kind of pleasant laziness in order to enjoy themselves in aimless play, looping together in interrupted rounds that both bring together and disperse their agile and timid assembly."[52] The ensuing "Chanson dansée" highlights "three blue athletes who bounce among the pink 'biches' while singers mixed in with the orchestra sing a song in a popular style."[53] The following "Adagietto," which was designed as a solo number for dancer Véra Nemtchinova, captivated the critics. As Adolphe Boschot decribed, the ballerina's "torso is covered in blue; her skintight vest is cut above the waist. Her legs are covered only by shorts. When the dancer tightens them and walks on the tips of her toes in imitation of the steps of a parade she creates irresistably comic effects."[54] As a result of her "ambiguous charm," this "Woman in Blue" immediately seduces the "best-looking and most elegant of the athletes."[55] The next movement, "Jeu," enacts a flirtatious game of hide-and-seek in which the two remaining men and the corps de ballet "catch one another, break up, scheme, move the couch around, use it as a springboard, and laugh the laugh of youth."[56] The "Rag-Mazurka" that follows was danced by Nijinska herself. For Poulenc, she was the Hostess of this party, a character that the critic Claude Rostand referred to as a mixture of "the chic of the casino and the brothel" and whose charms ultimately suceed in seducing the remaining two athletes.[57] Following the dance of the Hostess, the Woman in Blue and the athlete return for a *pas de deux*, "Andantino." Two young women from the corps de ballet break away from the main group to perform a dance suggesting a "suave closeness."[58] Their ambiguous "Petite chanson dansée" is eventually broken up by the return of the Hostess and Woman in Blue with their suitors in tow for the ensemble "Final" that critic André Coeuroy claimed "encapsulated, under the variety of its rythms, the unity of the inspiration."[59]

Poulenc was obviously attracted to the idea of presenting a ballet that revolved around unconventional sexualities, and later admitted that *Les Biches* was indebted to the "erotic atmosphere" of his youth.[60] He was particularly thrilled with the imagination and sexual daring of Nijinska's choreography. Writing to Diaghilev from Monte Carlo a few days before the premiere, he described the "craziness" (*folie*) of her ideas for the ballet's fourth scene, "Jeu":

> Listen to this: thinking that the sofa is a prima donna in the same way that she is, Nijinska makes it dance throughout the entire game!!! . . . During the Presto the female dancers sit down, jump in the air, fall

> down on the cushions, and roll around on their backs while the two men straddle the back of the couch. Following this, they move the poor thing, which has to be incredibly solid, all over the place. When the music calms down in the middle, the star dancer and [Anatole] Wilzak feel each other up onstage. The female dancers use the sofa (which has its back to the public) as an observatory, lifting and hiding their heads behind it. When the "game" continues—*listen to this*—the two men move the couch to reveal two women on the floor, their heads positioned in each other's laps in a way that reminds me of Barbette.[61]

Lynn Garafola has argued that *Les Biches* offers a "critique of sexual mores" through its exploration of "a host of taboo themes—narcissism, voyeurism, female sexual power, castration, sapphism—with a directness hitherto unparalleled on the ballet stage."[62] Certainly, the interplay of modern sexualities emerges as one of the ballet's primary themes, but it would be incorrect to read *Les Biches* solely as a revolutionary mise-en-scène of sexual taboos. Rather, the true aesthetic novelty of *Les Biches* involves the simultaneous articulation of the competing theatrical registers of sexual conventionality and deviancy. Ultimately, in the absence of a printed scenario and inspired by Poulenc's music, Nijinska was able to propose a sexually ambiguous choreography that allowed for a variety of critical reactions, many of which were not always attuned to the work's deviant undercurrents. Poulenc later claimed that in his ballet "one can either see nothing, or imagine the worst."[63] Indeed, if camp's primary aesthetic effect plays with one's ability or inability to recognize queerness, *Les Biches* emerges as a case study of the style.

Camp aesthetics may be noted throughout *Les Biches*, but techniques of cross-dressing, androgyny, and same-sex desire are most apparent in three of the ballet's central scenes: the Woman in Blue's "Adagietto," the Hostess's "Rag-Mazurka," and the "Petite chanson dansée" featuring the two young women. What makes these scenes camp is the way the sexual deviancies suggested by Nijinska's choreograpy are often masked by an ensemble of dramatic, gestural, and musical conventions that strongly reinforce the conventional theme of heterosexual romantic desire.[64] Poulenc himself emphasized how *Les Biches* was bound to tradition when he acknowledged the ballet's creative debt to Michel Fokine's nostalgic ballet blanc, *Les Sylphides*, first performed by the Ballets Russes in Paris in 1909.[65] Poulenc insisted that *Les Biches* was a "kind of modernized *Sylphides*" and stated in an interview prior to the premiere that "the Sylphides were women-butterflies in romantic moonlight. Here [in *Les Biches*], these are woman used to Rolls-Royces and Cartier pearl necklaces. In this time of dance halls, they are hectic and elastic,

subjected to the rhythm of modern life."[66] Many critics noted resemblances between the two works.[67] Robert Brussel wrote in his review of the ballet's Parisian premiere that "*Les Biches* could have been subtitled *The Sylphides in the Studio of the Fashion Designer*," thus implying that the modernity of Poulenc's ballet was primarily attributable to the modernization of the costumes to reflect the lifestyle fashions of the day.[68] Louis Laloy concurred that *Les Biches* proposed an updating of the earlier ballet in the way it proposes "a lesson about love, which doesn't take place in some old-fashioned park, but rather in a room rendered dream-like by this oversized window with its diaphanous drapes."[69] Marie Laurencin's décor also prompted comparisons to Fokine's ballet, with Brussel commenting on how *Les Sylphides*, with its twilight hues of whites and grays had found a modernized echo in the designer's use of pink lighting over a homogenous palette of delicate pastels.[70] But certainly, the most subversive visual reference to *Les Sylphides* in Poulenc's ballet concerned the Woman in Blue, danced at both the Monte Carlo and Parisian premieres by Vera Nemtchinova. Sporting a dark velvet doublet, white gloves, and tights, not only did her costume contrast with the pastel pinks of the assembled maidens, it was also practically identical to the one worn by the sole male character—a romantic poet—in Fokine's *Les Sylphides*.[71] Louis Schneider, in his review of *Les Biches*, was one of the few to catch this subtle act of cross-dressing and to explictly draw attention to the Woman in Blue's androgynous appeal. He praised Nemtchinova for her "feminine talent, but also her masculine vigor and springiness in the role of the dandy!"[72]

Although Schneider recognized this gender-bending ruse, we can forgive him for calling it by the wrong name. For obviously the Woman in Blue is no dandy in the conventional sense of the term. Rather, by wearing the same clothes as that of the poet from *Les Sylphides*, her cross-dressing performance squarely positions her within the aesthetic universe of camp. As Lydia Sokolova wrote, "It was never quite clear whether or not she was meant to be a page boy."[73] Lynn Garafola has proposed that the Woman in Blue could either be understood "as an old-style ballerina in ambisexual drag or a fabulous drag queen who happens to be female."[74] If we acknowledge the uncanny resemblance between the character's costume and that of the male lead from *Les Sylphides*, it is the second of Garafola's proposals that appears the most convincing. For Jean Cocteau, the entrance of Nemtchinova was, "in the truest sense of the word, sublime."[75] "Issuing forth from the wings on her toes," and adopting "classical steps and quite new gestures," she was a camp figure so androgynous as to defy conventional categorization.[76] The Woman in Blue's "double aspect," her masculine

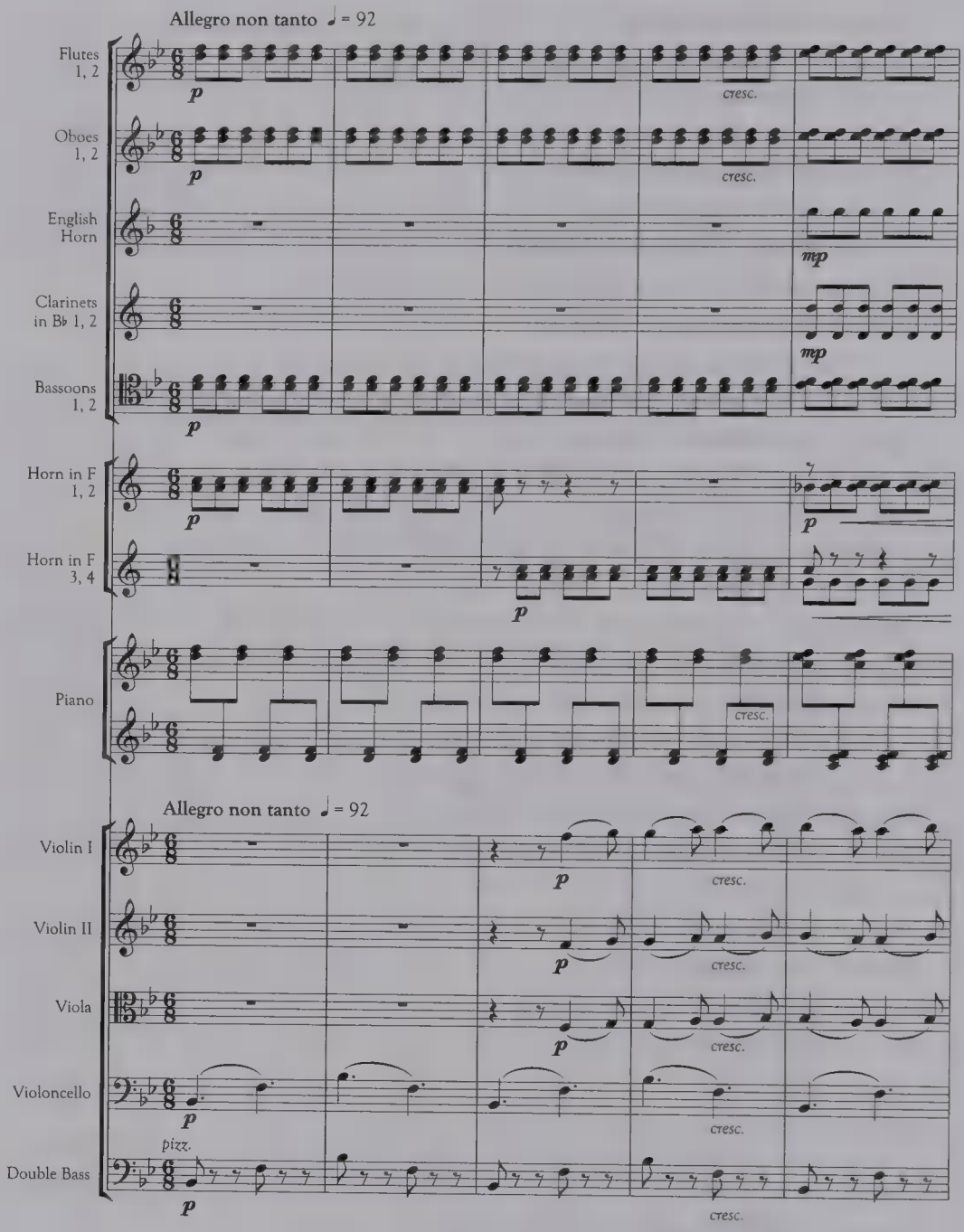
attire and feminine gestures, points not only to the character's ambiguous sexuality, but also to that of the athlete so immediately enamoured by her incongruous charms.[77]

How then did Poulenc's music contribute to underlining this cross-dressing gesture? That the composer was after something especially novel and ambiguous in his characterization of the Woman in Blue is clear. Writing to Diaghilev, he admitted that finding the character's music had not been an easy task:

> I have finally found the music for the star soloist for the third part of my ballet, but how difficult it was! I hope to have avoided the 1830 waltz, the 1870 waltz, the Italian adagio, the Casella "wrong-note" waltz, and the sad waltz (*Parade*). In fact, it is a very supple dance in 2/4, very *danceable* and andantino. It begins in B-flat and then indulges itself in the most unexpected modulations. I am sure that this is what is needed.[78]

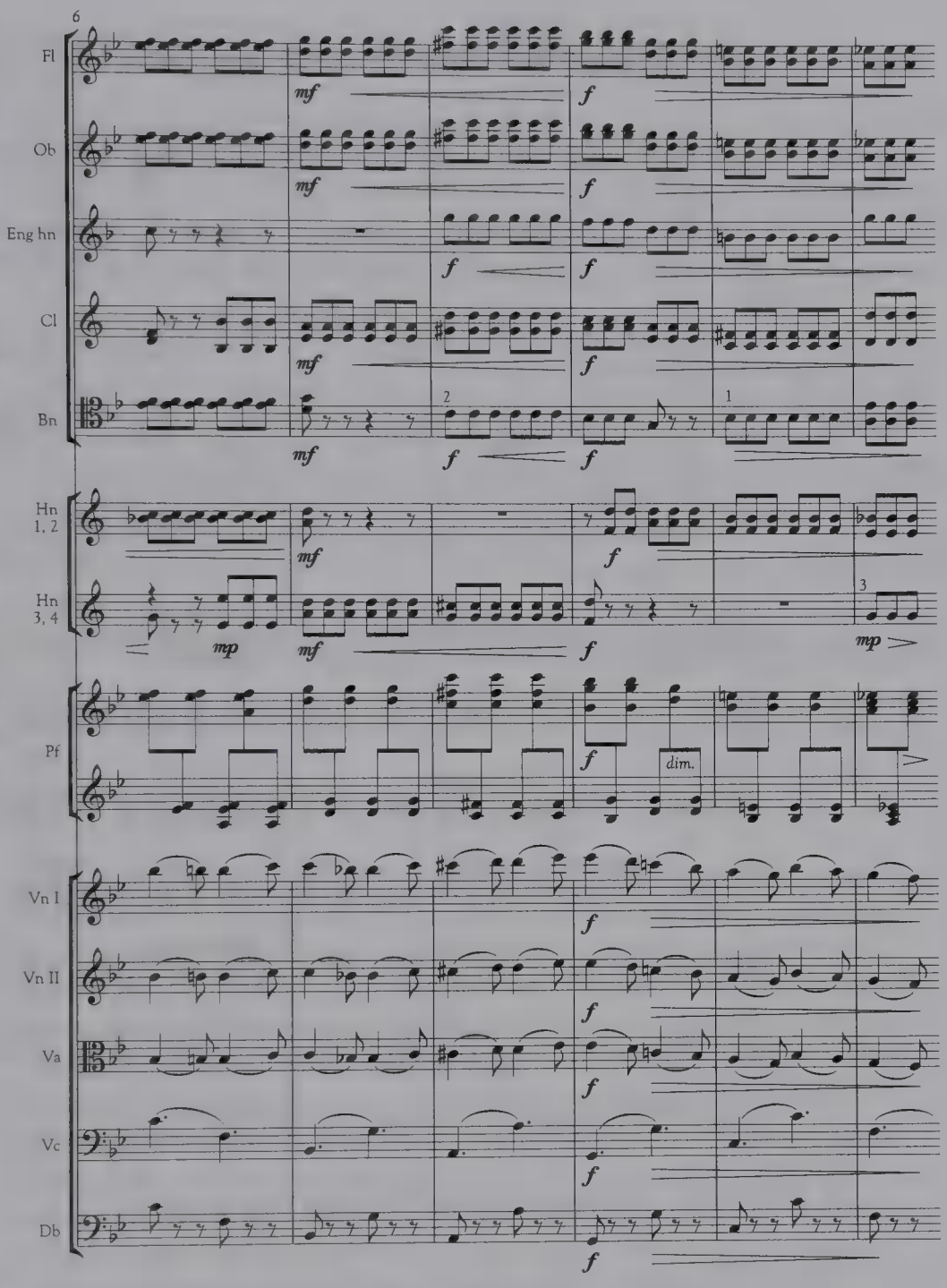
Clearly, the Woman in Blue could settle for nothing less than a purposefully original accompaniment. "Unexpected modulations" were perhaps necessary to underline the pronounced sexual ambiguity of this character, which one reviewer claimed reminded him of "a page, a hunter, and an acrobat."[79] Yet, despite the fact that Poulenc implictly claimed in his letter to Diaghilev to have sidestepped important historical precedents in his musical rendering, he later revealed that things were even more ambiguous than he had initially claimed. Indeed, in his 1954 radio interviews with Claude Rostand, he admitted that the inspiration for the Woman in Blue's "Adagietto" had been "suggested to him by one of the variations from [Tchaikovsky's] *The Sleeping Beauty.*"[80] Following this confession, he played both themes in succession to allow his audience to savour the manner in which he had transformed Tchaikovsky's tune (ex. 1A and B).

Despite Poulenc's candid demonstration, Keith Daniel has doubted the musical resemblance between the two excerpts, suggesting that Poulenc's theme, with its emphasis on the mediant, is more closely related to the main theme of César Franck's Symphony in D Minor.[81] Certainly, the relationship between Poulenc's "Adagietto" and Tchaikovsky's "Pas de quatre" could never be viewed as a case study of straightforward musical borrowing. However, there are sufficient similarities between the two that justify reading Poulenc's lightly orchestrated theme as a creative reimagining of Tchaikovsky's romantic utterance. For example, the shared presence of a steady rythmic pulse, the manner in which both melodies acquire a distinctive sweep by foregrounding the anacrusis, and the incidence of similar semitonal



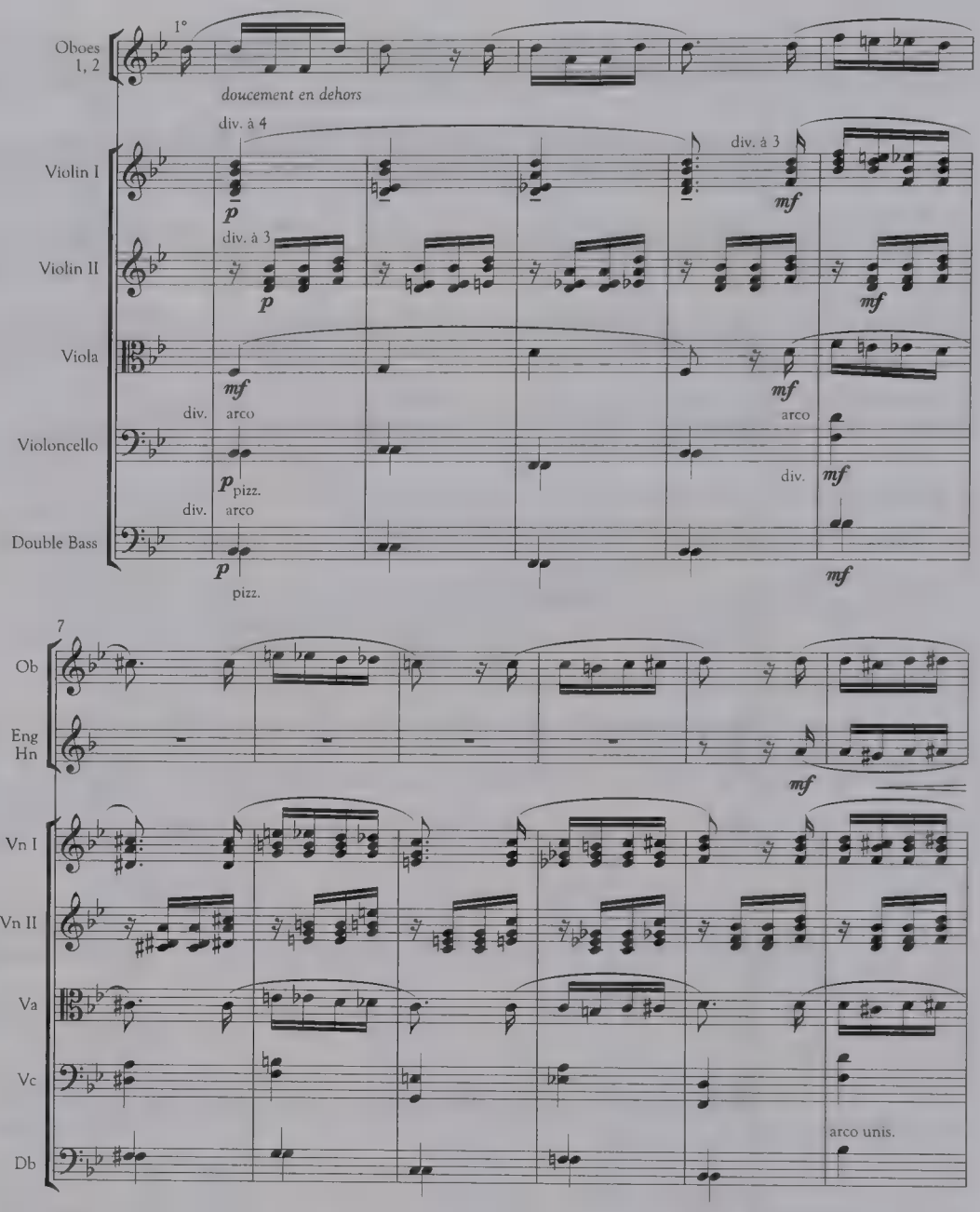
Example 1a. Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky, *The Sleeping Beauty*, no. 23, "Pas de quatre," mm. 1–11.

voice-leading strategies (melodic in Tchaikovsky; harmonic in Poulenc) all bring the two themes into similar, though not identical, aesthetic orbits. Orchestration also plays a role in asserting an atmospheric similarity in the way that both excerpts rely upon the upper strings as a means of reinforcing a pervasive sense of yearning and desire.



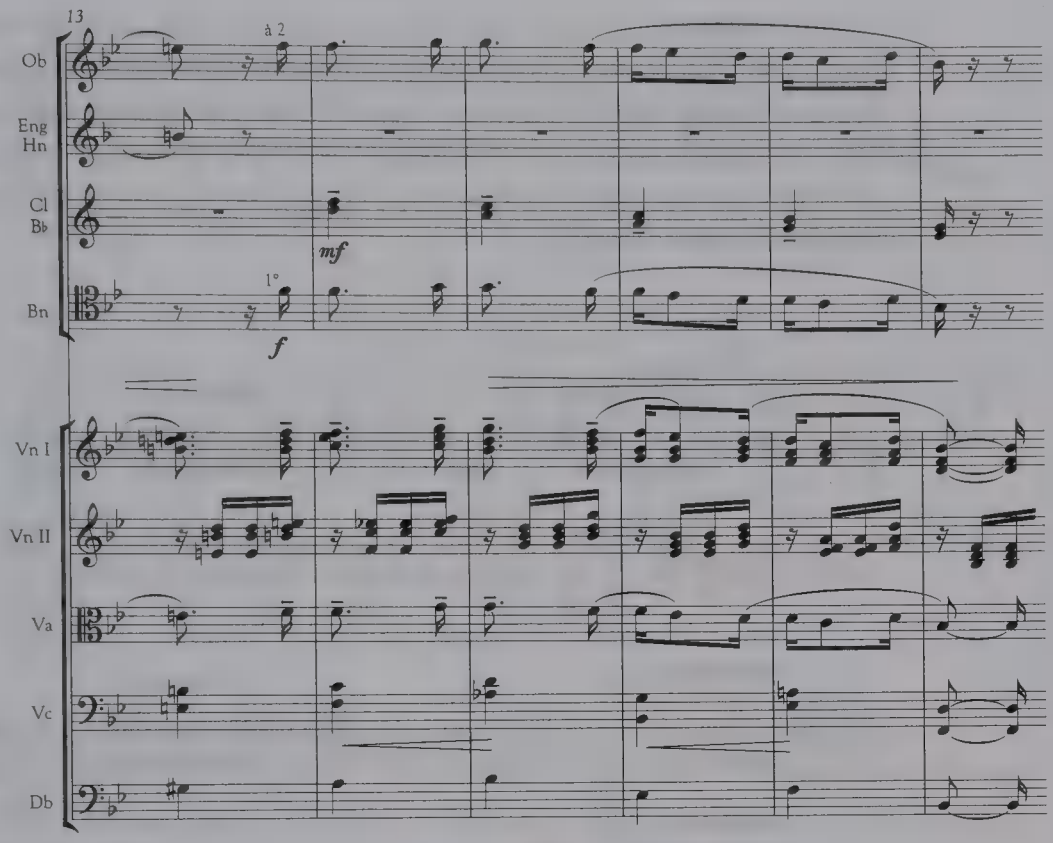
Example 1a. Continued

As the composer recalled in his interviews with Claude Rostand, Tchaikovsky's works had been "the enchantment of my youth."[82] Poulenc also revealed that if he had dared to reference Tchaikovsky in *Les Biches*, it was only because Igor Stravinsky had already "cleared the composer through customs" in his Tchaikovsky-inspired opera *Mavra*,



Example 1b. Poulenc, *Les Biches*, "Adagietto," mm. 11–28.

first performed in Paris in 1922.[83] Significantly, Poulenc was one of *Mavra*'s rare supporters, and he later described his love for the work as a "passionate veneration."[84] Following the premiere, he wrote to Milhaud to tell him that Stravinsky's opera had left him "jubilant," and he later divulged that he would regularly play the work's overture "more than twenty times on a given day."[85] As such, though Poulenc's crafty evocation of Tchaikovsky's *The Sleeping Beauty* can certainly be read as an

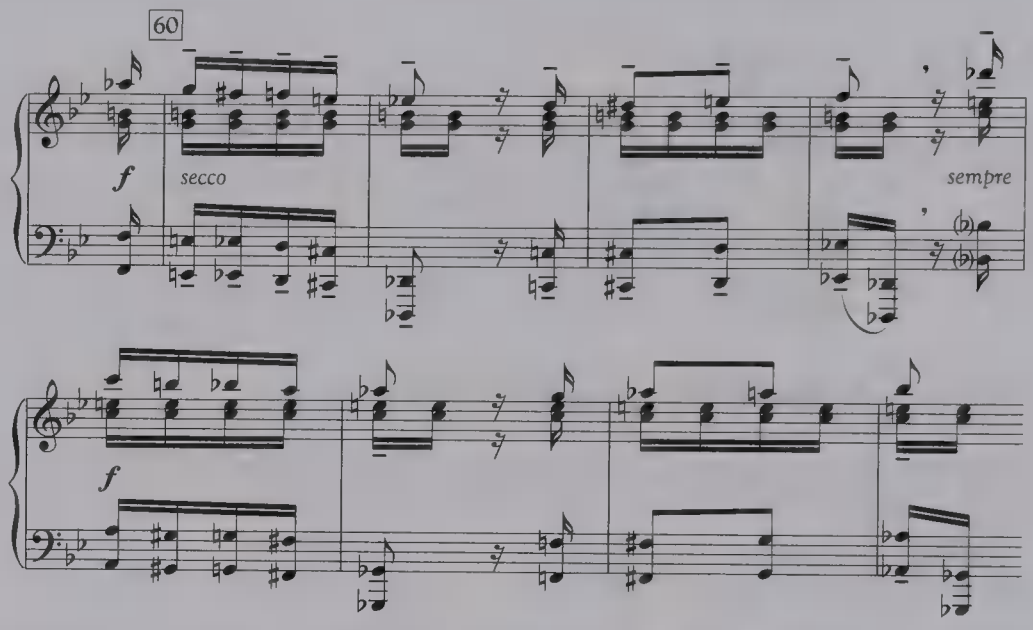


Example 1b. Continued

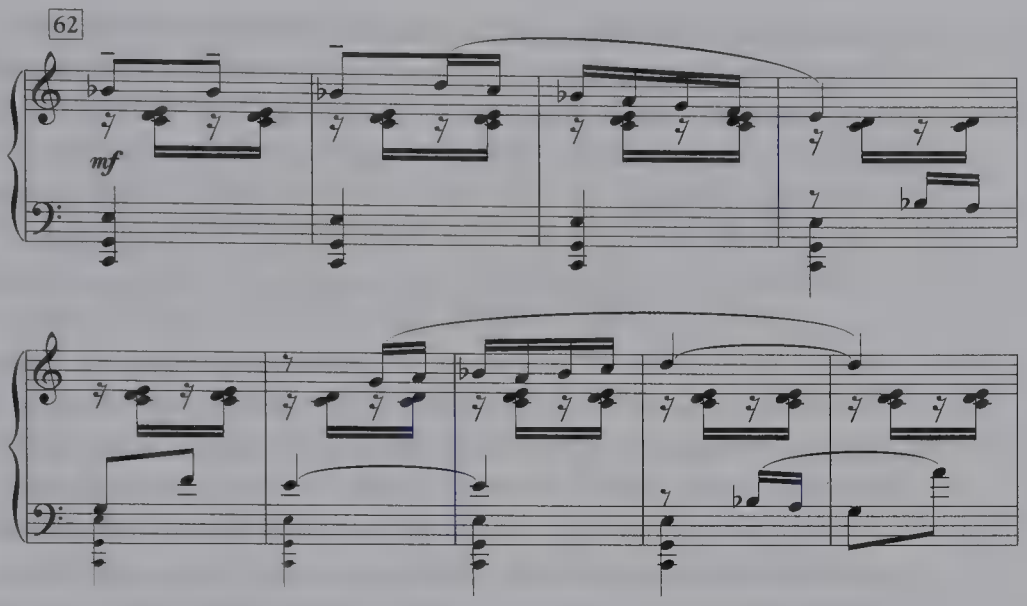
indirect homage to his idol, Igor Stravinsky, it also served the purpose of establishing the theme of heterosexual desire as an alibi for the work's queer subtext. As Garafola argues, the Woman in Blue is presented amid Poulenc's Tchaikovskian strains as "a seductress who goes through the motions of heterosexual coupling."[86] A cross-dressing, ambiguous character, her dance is nonethless based "on a bedrock of classical conventions" that allows her to engage in a "stylized erotics" of cold and consummate artifice.[87] Poulenc described Nijinska's choreography as "being based entirely on the classical technique of point, arabesques, and grands jetés" and thereby emphasized how the Woman in Blue's gestures mimicked the conventional feminine gestures of Romantic ballet, like those found in *Les Sylphides* or *The Sleeping Beauty*.[88] Ultimately, in *Les Biches*, the "solo de l'étoile" emerges to create a compelling illusion of heterosexual desire and it is Poulenc's music that renders this illusion complete. As Wilfrid Mellers writes, the main theme of Poulenc's "Adagietto" is "the essence of amorousness"—it is a "dream of love."[89]

Despite the theme's romantic affect, various idiosyncracies in the Woman in Blue's drag routine serve to undermine this heteronormative

mise-en-scène in a subtle way. Indeed, the episodic structure of Poulenc's "Adagietto" allows for incongruous musical interjections that discreetly point to the queer reality of this cross-dressing figure. The first such disruption occurs when a violent outburst of *secco* chords momentarily sunders the veil of seduction that had been created by Poulenc's lithe modulations (ex. 2).



Example 2. Poulenc, *Les Biches*, "Adagietto," rehearsal no. 60.

This moment may be interpreted, to borrow Michael Puri's terminology, as a "geste brusque," one that could conceivably be read as a sign of the character's masculine aggression, motivated by jealousy, toward the corps de ballet attentively scrutinizing his seductive cross-dressing performance from the sidelines.[90] The second episode is stranger still. Entirely forgoing modulation, the music stops dead in its tracks for a moment of mechanized stasis reminiscent of another of Poulenc's early-career idols, Erik Satie. Whereas the Tchaikovskian elegance of the "Adagietto" served to dramatize the feminine appeal of this "woman a skinny and straight as an adolescent," here the Woman in Blue's posturing is undone by music that betrays the artificiality of the character's feminine stance.[91] Suitably, Poulenc employs modern musical rhetoric to reveal the fraught situation of his cross-dressing character. Without the sumptuous musical costume that allowed him to look and feel like a girl, the drag-queen is here brought back to the banality of the everyday with a melody upheld by pungent dissonances and a twenty-six-bar pedal point (ex. 3).

Example 3. Poulenc, *Les Biches*, "Adagietto," rehearsal no. 62.

Ultimately, Poulenc's musical treatment, allied with Laurencin's costumes and Nijinska's choreography, conspires to emphasize the sexual liminality of the incongruous Woman in Blue. Indeed, by emerging as a nexus of irresolvable contradictions, this character subtly exemplifies the erotic tensions and gender ambivalence that lies at the very heart of Poulenc's ballet.

The Hostess, who is first introduced in the fifth movement "Rag-Mazurka," offers another example of such ambiguous sexuality. Decked out in an outfit of understated elegance covered in feminizing accessories (feathers and yards of pearls), she could, depending on one's perspective, be read either as a modern sophisticate or as a man attempting to "pass" as a woman. As Garafola has suggested, the Hostess's queerness, for those interested in looking for it, was made particularly manifest through her dance. Though dressed like a demimondaine, she wore soft slippers, not pointe shoes, and expressed herself through a typically masculine choreographic repertory consisting of flying jumps and beaten steps.[92] "Wobbling around with obstinately swaying hips," some critics found the gestural effect unsuccessful and inappropriate.[93] This awkwardness was perhaps simply a further indication of the character's confused sexual identity—a way for Nijinska to dramatically depict this "man trapped in a female body."[94] Whatever the answer, Poulenc provided this character, danced by Nijinska herself, with music that brought attention to its conflicted nature. In fact, Poulenc's "Rag-Mazurka" is as confused about its genre as the Hostess seems to be

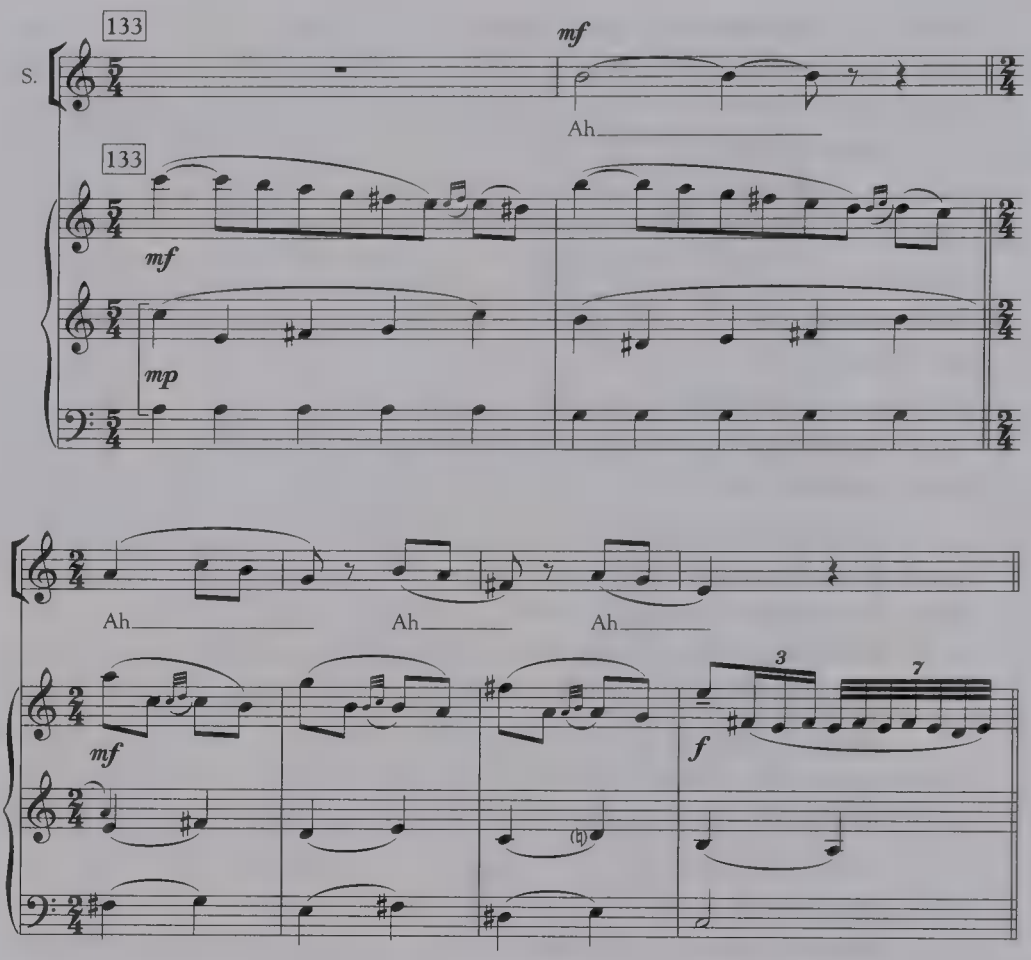
about her gender. Though the presence of melodies organized around dotted rhythms ostensibly conjure up the worlds of both mazurka and rag, neither dance is consistently thematicized and musically maintained. As Keith Daniel writes, Poulenc's rag "has little in common with American ragtime; his incessant dotted rhythms do not capture the vibrant syncopation and steady, vamped bass of true ragtime."[95] At best, by employing an orchestration that periodically combines muted brass and percussion, early twentieth-century rags are only vaguely evoked. But as Robert Brussel remarked, "A person expecting the cadence of a modern step suddenly realizes that it has been rejuvenated or aged by half a century when a runaway reference to an old song gives way to the fashions of the day."[96] Poulenc's ability to confuse two distinct genres by stitching them together as one creates a hybrid musical entity that defies precise categorization. That this cross-bred music is surrounded by a litter of passages that alludes to everything from Mozartian melodies (rehearsal no. 104) to Tchaikovskian bombast (rehearsal no. 107), serves to blur generic distinctions ever further. As if this were not enough, the "Rag-Mazurka" also abounds in quirky mixed time signatures $\left(\frac{6}{8}=\frac{2}{4};\ \frac{2}{2}=\frac{4}{8};\ \frac{2}{2}=\frac{4}{4};\ \frac{4}{2}=\frac{8}{4}\right)$ and quickly changing meters, all of which suggest that the composer took particular pleasure in queering the Hostess's beat.

By the end of the "Rag-Mazurka," all three of the athletes have been seduced and accounted for. Left to their own devices, two young women separate themselves from the corps de ballet to perform a "Petite chanson dansée" that further highlights what Diaghilev referred to as "the ambiguous blend of innocence and corruption" that emerges as the ballet's primary theme.[97] For Poulenc, this little dance was "very secretly Proustian" and reminded him of the covert tryst between Albertine and her "girlfriend" in the author's *À la recherche du temps perdu*.[98] In *Sodome et Gomorrhe*, the fourth part of Proust's multivolume novel, the narrator gradually discovers that Albertine, for whom he has romantic feelings, engages in lesbian sexual encounters. It is the narrator's friend, Dr. Cottard, who first points out the true nature of Albertine's relationship with her "petite amie," Andrée:

> "Hey, look," he added as he pointed out Albertine and Andrée who were slowly waltzing, squeezed against each other.
>
> "I forgot my eyeglasses and I don't see well, but they are certainly at the height of sensual pleasure. It is not generally known that it is especially through the breasts that women feel it. And look: theirs are completely touching."

> Indeed, the contact between the breasts of Andrée and those of Albertine had not stopped. I don't know if they heard or guessed Cottard's comments, but they released each other slightly, all the while continuing to waltz. At that instant, Andrée said something to Albertine and she laughed that same penetrating and profound laugh I had heard earlier. But the distress it caused me this time couldn't have been more painful; Albertine seemed to want to draw attention to her breasts, to get Andrée to notice there some voluptuous and secret trembling.[99]

Poulenc's deviant "Petite chanson dansée," danced by "a brunette and a blonde, both with short hair," is given an air of deceptive naïveté through a pastoral instrumental introduction that highlights a modal duet between clarinet and oboe.[100] This is immediately followed by the intervention of a three-part chorus that intones a folksy text based on the well-known *chanson populaire* "J'ai du beau laurier."[101] In *Les Biches*, the chorus intervenes in three movements—"Chanson dansée," "Jeu," and "Petite chanson dansée"—an effect first used in the ballet repertory for Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé* of 1912.[102] Whereas the offstage chorus in *Daphnis*, as Michael Puri has noted, reinforces the dandyish hedonism and the "thematics of sublimation" which characterize that work, Poulenc's use of this effect, derived from that found in *Pucinella*, contributes to the clever erotic doublespeak of his ballet.[103] All of the folk texts used by Poulenc may be interpreted on at least two levels; either as innocent parables about courtship and bourgeois marriage or as sardonic commentaries on the coldhearted, gender-bending sex games taking place onstage. In the "Petite chanson dansée," the composer appears to poke fun at the naïve romantic conventions of "J'ai du beau laurier." Whereas tenors and basses offer their laurel as an invitation to romance, the sopranos spurn their gifts, preferring rather "a bouquet of wallflowers, a freshly picked bouquet" (*Je préférerais un bouquet de giroflées, un bouquet tout frais cueilli*). This botanical disagreement constitutes the essence of Poulenc's pithy adaptation. But despite the simplicity of its message, the thick overlay of text no doubt made it difficult for audience members to understand what all the fuss was about.[104] Of course, amid the din, the two young girls continue to suggestively embrace, and indeed the refusal of the sopranos to accept the men's evergreen presents may be interpreted as a sympathetic identification with the lesbian antics onstage. When the sopranos sing on their own, it is to intone a series of breathless "ahs" over a passage highlighting gently touching parallel seconds and mordants similar to those found in *Pucinella* (ex. 4). Could we at this moment be hearing Poulenc's musical transposition of Albertine and Andrée's "sensual pleasure"?



Example 4. Poulenc, *Les Biches*, "Petite chanson dansée," rehearsal no. 133.

Lydia Sokolova, who along with Lubov Tchernicheva played the part of the dancing girls, was not impressed by the number's sexual subtext and the choreography's overbearing physicality:

> The Rag-Mazurka was followed by what I always considered the weakest number in the ballet—a dance for Tchernicheva and myself. We were two inseparable "friends" in gray with camellias in our hair—inseparable in the most tiresome way: for if there is anything I dislike it is trying to dance when I am physically linked to someone else. Moving slightly behind me, Luba had one arm right around my neck and bosom. We came down in this clinch, and remained in it throughout the dance. I thought this female *pas de deux* was wrongly conceived and badly constructed: Nijinska cannot have understood the type of women we were meant to be, and certainly few people ever have been less Lesbian than Tchernicheva and myself.[105]

As Poulenc himself claimed, all of these references to various forms of sexual deviancy could either be seen or overlooked depending on one's

perspective. As the critic for *L'Éclair* commented, the ballet's "vague sentimental desires and puffs of sensuality" were all organized in such a way that "one can bring young, well-mannered girls to *Les Biches* without worry; they won't see anything—only beauty!"[106] Typical of nascent camp sensibilities, through the use of various stylistic, scenic, gestural, semantic, or musical alibis, the artistic collaboration between Poulenc, Nijinska, and Laurencin aimed to simultaneously reveal and dissimulate the ambiguities that informed so much of the "erotic atmosphere" to be found in *Les Biches*. Indeed, Poulenc's strategy of covert allusions extends right down to the ballet's title. As has been often noted, the word *biches* is itself pregnant with double entendre, referring most obviously to does, but also, in the underworld of Parisian slang, to a woman (or ironically, a man) of deviant sexual proclivities.

Although many critics did acknowledge a certain amount of perversity in the Ballets Russes production, reactions were split about Poulenc's intent. Although some regarded *Les Biches* as an unproblematic depiction of what Wilfrid Mellers later called "a rite about courtship and marriage," others were more attuned to the way it subtly celebrated erotic libertinage.[107] Some critics, like Gérard d'Houville of *Le Gaulois*, accepted the conventional meaning of *Les Biches*, when he wrote that the ballet was a nostalgic ode to "juvenile innocence." Obviously sensitive to the work's parallels with the romanticism of *Les Sylphides*, he was seduced by the fairy-tale décor inhabited by "these half-children, half-women that . . . resemble nymphs."[108] Others, however, like Henry Malherbe, were more attuned to the work's sexual perversity and recognized that Poulenc had fabricated "a mask of intentional naïveté in a work full of libertine languor."[109] Indeed, for Malherbe, the work's "neoclassical form finely covers up the heated eroticism."[110] Such comments suggest that the ballet was ultimately successful in presenting a multivalent message. Either a celebration of innocent courtship or a study of deviant taboos, it was a work that could be read both ways, depending on one's level of awareness or sympathy with the covert expressions of sexual deviancy lurking under the surface of the ballet's seductive façade. Long before Eve Sedgwick wrote about camp's "typifying gesture," Poulenc and his collaborators seem to have been secretly reaching out to those who might be willing to appreciate *Les Biches* from the same "perverse angle" from which it was created.[111] Poulenc first discovered this gesture, one that allowed him to simultaneously conceal and reveal his aesthetic engagement with queer sexual practices, in his work on *Les Biches*. As the 1920s drew to a close, this aesthetic strategy developed into a musical and personal coping strategy as he came to terms with the painful reality of his own queer sexuality.

Dressing Up to Cry

Although Poulenc's next ballet did not depict a party, it was definitely written for one. *Aubade*, composed during 1928 and 1929, was commissioned for a private ball hosted by Charles and Marie-Laure de Noailles in their famed *hôtel particulier* in the Place des États-Unis. Throughout the end of the 1920s, the Parisian residence of the Noailles, as well as their celebrated Cubist villa in the southern town of Hyères, were refuges for leading surrealists and their entourage. The party for which Poulenc composed *Aubade* was a surreal affair in its own right. Publicized as a "Materials Ball," guests were invited to don evening apparel concocted from everyday items such as wax paper, wickerwork, leather, upholstery, and the like.[112] Author Paul Morand came dressed in book covers, Valentine Hugo in table napkins, and the Baroness de Almeida donned sheaves of wheat.[113] *Aubade*, a "choreographic concerto," received its premiere amid these costumed luminaries on 18 June 1929. The work, like *Les Biches*, was choreographed by Nijinska; the décor, depicting a neoclassical temple, was signed by Jean-Michel Frank.[114] Poulenc performed the solo piano part, thereby clothing himself within the musical and dramatic narrative he had invented for the occasion.

Poulenc wrote *Aubade* in the midst of what Myriam Chimènes has described as a "serious depressive crisis."[115] In 1928, soon after having purchased a large home at Noizay, the composer proposed marriage to his childhood friend Raymonde Linossier.[116] She rejected his proposal. Soon after, he entered into an affair with artist Richard Chanlaire that was the source of considerable psychological anxiety. Writing to Valentine Hugo, Poulenc described his attachment to Chanlaire as a "big secret, my serious secret." It was an "*amazing*, but so anguishing love" and constituted the "*sole* raison d'être of my life," but which "because of its abnormality, is so hard for me to hide."[117] Poulenc sent the first sketch of *Aubade* to Chanlaire—"you whom I cherish the most in the whole world"—imploring his friend to "keep it safe, because it is the type of souvenir that sometimes moves you years later when you find it lost in a closet."[118] A second sketch was dedicated to Chanlaire's sister-in-law Suzette, in which the composer despondently referred to *Aubade* as a "wound," the labor of a "ravaged heart that has made me suffer and cry . . . to death."[119]

Wounds, suffering, and an unsettled heart within the context of desire all suggest close imbrications between the composer's personal life and that of the ballet's protagonist: Diane, virgin goddess of the hunt. In fact, drawing upon strategies developed in *Les Biches*, in

Aubade Poulenc treats the myth of Diane as an extravagant costume that provides the alibi for the expression of a sexual crisis. His scenario humanizes this goddess: Diane is a rebellious deity rather than a poised Appollonian one. She is stricken by private turmoil and decides to abandon the virgin community over which she rules in order to pursue a "burning love that ravishes her purity." The ballet's scenario, written by Poulenc himself, focuses on Diane's fateful decision to transgress her chaste role and to indulge in the forbidden delights of erotic passion:

> A glade at dawn.
>
> The companions of Diane, asleep on the sward, rouse themselves one by one, oppressed by an ill foreboding (Recitative I).
>
> Diane, consumed by a burning love that ravishes her purity, passes among them with disordered robes, goes out, and returns with signs of weariness (Rondeau).
>
> Her friends are eager to adorn her, but she yields with a bad grace (Presto). Meanwhile, she presses to her heart a bow which has been given to her (Recitative II), and dances a sad and dejected measure (Andante). The dance finished, she throws away the bow, lies down, and abandons herself to despair. Then she rises and flees into the wood, returning almost immediately (Allegro feroce). Her companions surround her, but she begs them to leave her alone. The youngest one presents her with her bow which she thrusts away with a dejected movement. . . . She continues to be crestfallen.
>
> Suddenly, taking advantage of the distraction of her companions who are questioning each other with their eyes, she bounds afresh into the forest.
>
> Dismayed, they look uncomprehendingly in the direction where she has disappeared, and see only her arms making a final gesture of farewell.
>
> Overcome, they fall to the ground, and little by little become motionless with grief. Quickly the dawn approaches. Everything is still. It is morning (Finale).[120]

Poulenc's scenario may be viewed as an allegorical commentary on his personal struggles with his sexuality at the close of the 1920s. Wilfred Mellers believed that *Aubade* had "autobiographical undertones," and more recently Richard Burton has gone further, suggesting that the work is "clearly expressive of some deep conflict within the composer himself who, as featured pianist, is identified very closely with the figure of Diana."[121] For Burton, the work revolves around "the

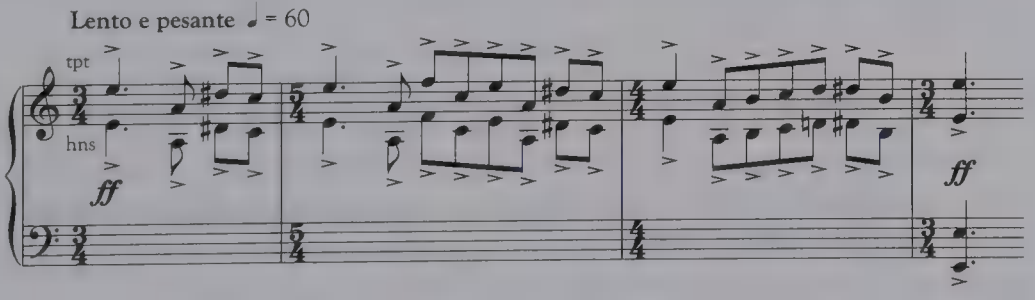
questions raised by [Diane's] thwarted sexuality" and he proposes that "though its sexual allegory is fuzzy at best, *Aubade* is clearly the work of a divided and unhappy individual whose inner conflicts are tearing him apart."[122]

The ballet's scenario, the various dedications, and Poulenc's letters from this period all allude to these "inner conflicts," but they are not the only elements that obliquely point to *Aubade*'s preoccupation with frustrated desire. The ballet's unusual premise as a "choreographic concerto," a genre that simultaneously highlights two protagonists (a solo pianist and a solo dancer) separated across disciplinary lines, further reinforces this theme. In 1954, Poulenc employed a surprising adjective to refer to this musical and scenic conception, when he described the ballet as "amphibious."[123] Poulenc employed this adjective a quarter-century after completing *Aubade*, and when we take into account his interest in surrealist poetry, the composer's word choice is revealing. As Daniel Albright has described in relation to Poulenc's *Les Mamelles des Tirésias*, one of surrealism's primary strategies was to substitute poetry's long-standing preoccupation with homologues (as in "the pen looks like a spire") with that of analogues (as in "the pen is a typewriter"). Albright explains that "surrealist theatre is a continual displacement of homologues by analogues, in which the principle of equivalence is switched from the level of structure to the level of function—likeness pertains to what things do, not to how things look."[124] Poulenc's pithy description of *Aubade* proceeds from the same premise. Clearly, the word *amphibian* fails to effectively describe the structure of Poulenc's ballet: *Aubade* neither looks nor sounds like a salamander. Yet when we recall the etymology of amphibian, which derives from *amphi* (ἀμφί), meaning "both sides" or "double," and *bios* (βίος), meaning "life," the word aptly characterizes *Aubade*'s ostensible function: that of theatrically representing Poulenc's two worlds—the straight (dry) public world of the virtuoso pianist and the world of his unspeakable (wet) gay desire, embodied on stage in the tortured gestures of a mute ballerina. Poulenc's amphibian description enacts a surrealist form of rhetorical dissimulation, one which, for a composer who had idolized Apollinaire since his teenage years, was already fully operative within his own idiosyncratic lingua franca.

These amphibian ambiguities, primarily centered on Diane's sexual turmoil, are subtly thematicized in Poulenc's music. *Aubade* enacts a narrative in which the tormented and love-struck Diane is brought into tension with the innocent world of her doting female companions. Diane's "turmoil," like Poulenc's own, is represented through distinct chromatic musical gestures that contrast with the Arcadian and

steadfastly tonal world of the virgin community that surrounds her. Typical of Poulenc's strategies of ambiguity and dissimulation, however, Diane's indecisiveness about revealing the erotic source of her anxiety prompts her to occasionally adopt the diatonic conventions of her companions. Even at those moments when Diane properly assumes the "chaste" tone befitting her status, her overwhelming desire for the seductive presence to which she is drawn is musically suggested through various chromatic markers that deviate from the diatonic material surrounding it. In this sense, Poulenc provides an effective musical portrait of his heroine while offering an autobiographical depiction of his own dilemma. Diane is caught between two diametrically opposed modes of representation: she is both chaste and licentious, conventional and deviant. Like Poulenc, challenged by the presence and frictions of such dualities in his personal life, Diane emerges as a testimony to the psychological duress related to the experience of liminality.

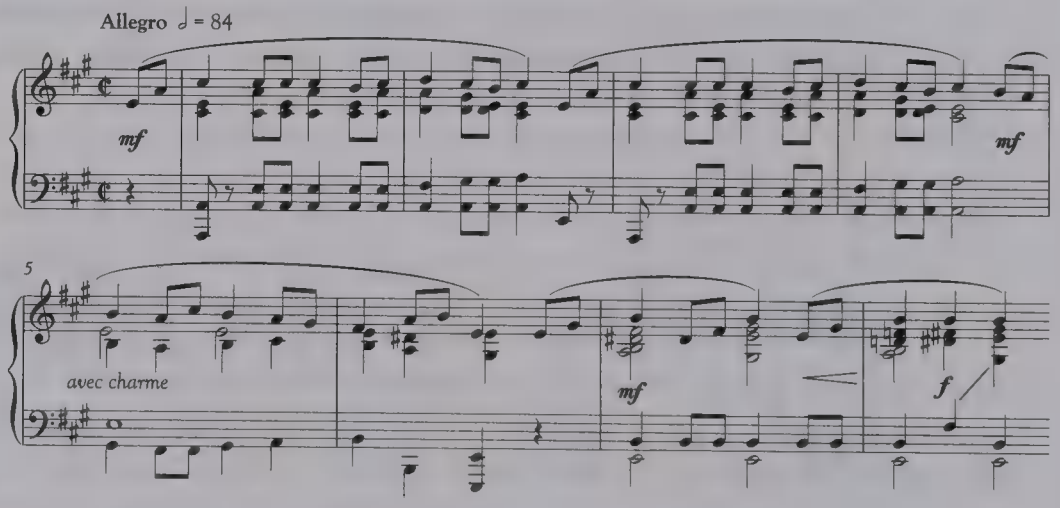
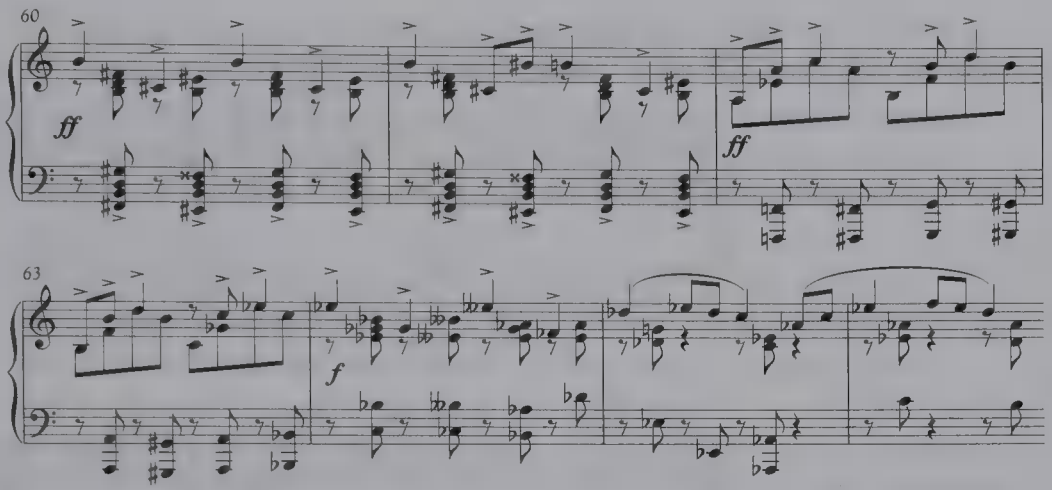
The opening motive of *Aubade*, which reccurs throughout the ballet, foreshadows these tensions and subtly dramatizes the heroine's attempt to conceal her emotional disarray. The archaic simplicity of this theme, scored for horns and trumpets, serves to underline the work's Ancient Greek alibi and ostensibly Apollonian inspiration (ex. 5). But it also highlights a painful semitonal contrast between D-sharp and E that foreshadows Diane's turmoil. Following this stark introduction, the ensuing piano solo, violent and tempestuous, may be read as an introduction to Diane's overwhelming despair. As Mellers writes, "Although the heroine has not yet appeared, the piano soloist (Poulenc) is her harbinger, in energy, rebellion, and incipient lunacy."[125] In the Toccata section of the Introduction, these ideas are rendered through the pianist's virtuosic variations on the dissonant implications of the opening fanfare. Harmonic semitone relations



Example 5. Poulenc, *Aubade*, "Toccata," mm. 1–4.

(E minor/F major; C major/C-sharp minor; C major/B major) are rapidly and haphazardly juxtaposed and irresistibly lead to a final "blazing" A-minor conclusion which, as the curtain rises on the sleeping virgins, suddenly morphs into the major mode.

The "Recitatif I" with which the scenic action commences employs these semi-tonal frictions as a means of representing the "foreboding" that weighs so heavily upon the nocturnal stirrings of Diane's maidens. Beginning with a regal statement replete with baroque figuration and recalls of the introductory fanfare, the movement unexpectedly segues into a lament in which Diane's anguish is once again foreshadowed through painful semitonal frictions (rehearsal no. 3). But when Diane's maidens awake in the third movement "Rondeau," this somber atmosphere is entirely dissipated. Mozart-inspired strains, punctuated by perfect authentic cadences, characterize the goddess's virgin acolytes and their ethos of purity, stability, and nobility. As Paul Le Flem commented in an early review of the work, Poulenc's music for *Aubade* "doesn't disdain, now and then, the tender sentimental song, and friendly visits to Madame the Dominant"[126] (ex. 6).

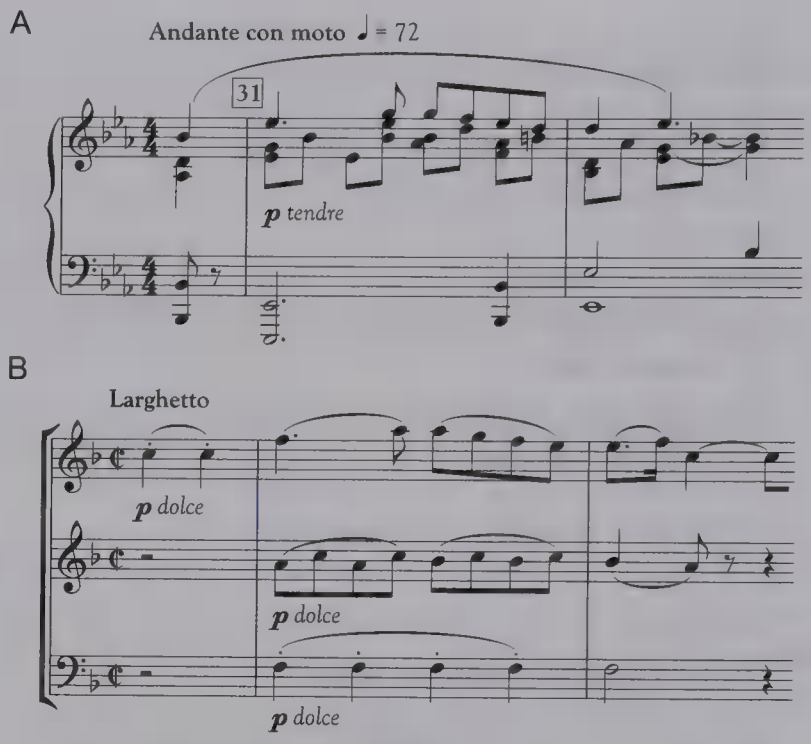
When Diane appears (rehearsal no. 9), even though her music unmistakably engages a contrasting emotional register and melodically foregrounds semitonal frictions, it generally conforms to the classical tone introduced by her companions. Despite her inner turmoil, she dances to predominately diatonic music that more adequately befits her status as a goddess. Her quirky theme cadences to C-sharp major and carefully obeys the conventions of the rondeau's episodic structure. Only

Example 6. Poulenc, *Aubade*, "Rondeau," mm. 1–8.

Example 7. Poulenc, *Aubade*, "Rondeau," mm. 60–66.

at rehearsal no. 11, when the piano soloist breaks free from the instrumental pack, does Diane's emotional façade crumble slightly. Disjointed and scampering across seemingly directionless harmonic ground, the disheveled heroine recklessly bounds through cadences emphasizing far-flung tonal relationships (ex. 7).

The straddling of conflicting emotional registers that gradually comes to define Diane finds its fullest expression in the central movement of the work: the Andante (*Variation de Diane*). Writing to Charles de Noailles in 1928, Poulenc had shown enthusiasm for the *Aubade* project, announcing that "the idea of a divertissement for sixteen-year-old virgins excites me so much that I'm afraid for my virtue."[127] Claiming that he was already thinking a lot about what he would write for the Materials Ball, he proposed a tentative instrumentation (2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 1 trumpet, 1 tuba, 2 cellos, 2 double basses, timpani, and piano)[128] with the following caveat:

> If I've left out any that you particularly love, let me know. The Archbishop of Salzburg adored the basset horn. Mozart added two in a divertimento that he wrote for him. As I'm no Mozart you can easily imagine that I'm also even more docile than he.[129]

Though this comment may be simply read as an elegant expression of gratitude for a lucrative commission, Diane's Andante reveals that the composer took this Mozartian precedent very seriously, given that the main theme of the movement quotes the opening melody of the Larghetto from Mozart's Divertimento for Three Basset Horns, K. 439b. Indeed, the semitonal angst that has been a consistent accompaniment to Diane's appearances throughout the ballet is here momentarily



Example 8. (A) Poulenc, *Aubade*, "Andante," mm. 1–2. (B) Mozart, Divertimento for Three Basset Horns (K. 439b), "Larghetto," mm. 1–3.

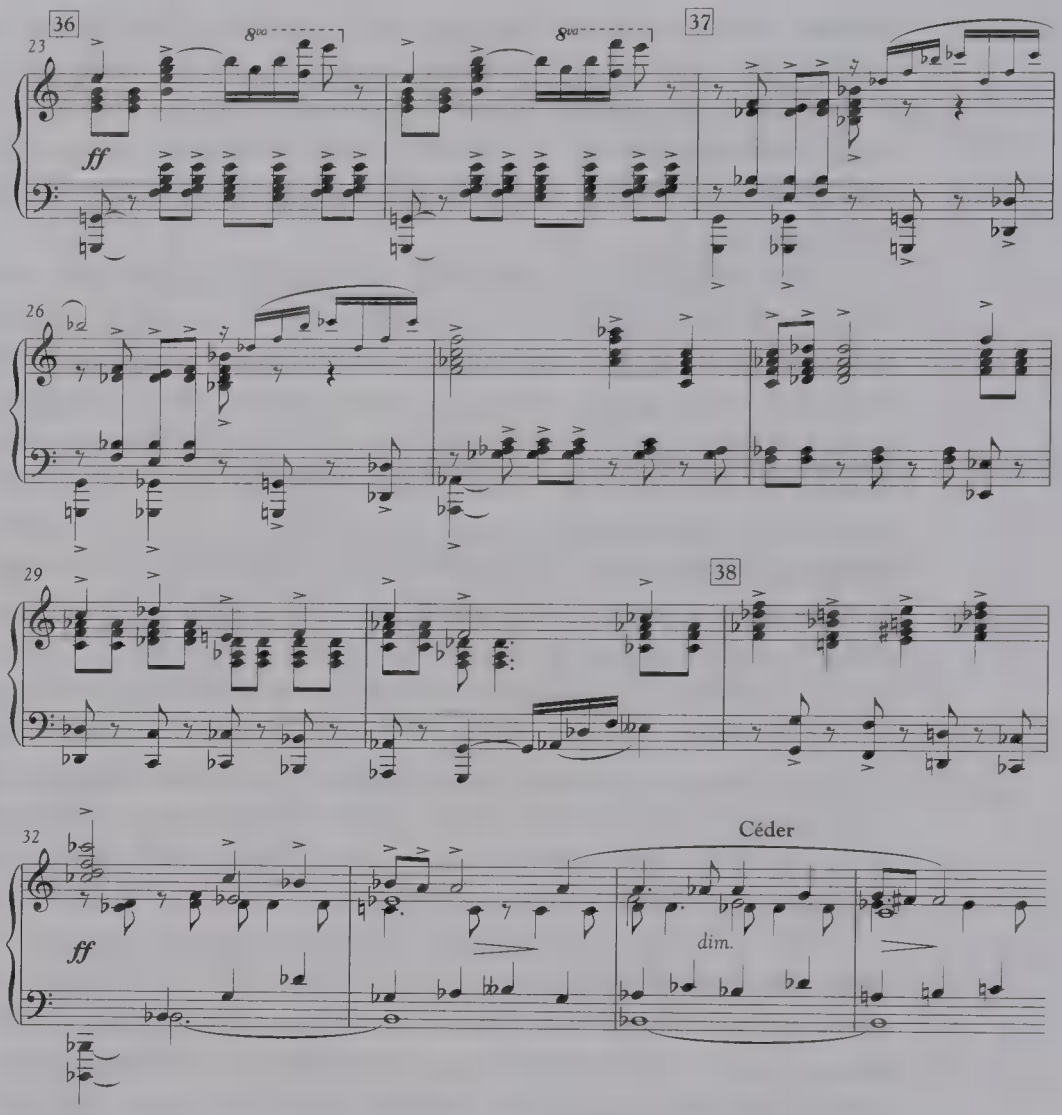
replaced by the diatonic elegance of what Wilfrid Mellers has described as the protagonist's "Dream of Love"[130] (ex. 8A and B).

Inasmuch as the preceding movements express Diane's public attempts to come to grips with the conflicting demands of public duty and private desire, the Andante figures as a dramatic parenthesis that allows for the full expression of the heroine's conflicted emotional state. Arguably the emotional core of the ballet, the Andante exemplifies with particular acuity the camp strategies pervading Poulenc's ballet, especially in the way in which the music articulates an unresolvable dualism between the competing registers of authenticity and theatricality. The prominent positioning of the Mozart quotation at the outset of the movement, and its contrast with the chromatic material that up until then had characterized the figure of Diane, immediately signals a self-referential performative moment. Certainly, as the central vehicle for Diane's corporal and musical expression, and as a result of its position as a type of "aria," the opening of the Andante may be seen as drawing attention to the sincere expression of the character's emotional world. Viewed differently, however, the theme's expressive charge comes across as curiously artificial; after all, it does not represent the Diane the

listener has experienced thus far, nor is the Mozartian theme an intrinsic element of Poulenc's personal musical "voice." Rather, we are confronted with an example of musical ventriloquism in which—once again—Diane conforms to the conventional diatonic purity that, throughout the ballet, is consistently associated with her Arcadian companions.

But though the opening of the Andante engages with such markers of theatricality, the remainder of the movement offers compelling reasons to believe that Diane's soliloquy is a transparent and authentic performance of intense emotionality. This is suggested primarily in the ways that Diane "loses control" of her Mozartian persona and thereby undermines the formal theatricality with which the movement began. Such spontaneity erupts at rehearsal no. 34 when a horncall initiates a quicker tempo that is soon after followed by chromatic and heavily accentuated rag-like rhythms. This is followed by the most densely scored passage of the entire ballet, during which Diane is presented through a cyclic apotheosis of the thematic material associated with her; minor seconds abound, as well as reminiscences of the frantic piano cadenza of the work's introduction. All of this leads to a hastily prepared climax (at rehearsal no. 38) that gives way to a plaintive horn solo. An abject and chromatically descending melody, it functions as an expression of Diane's shameful state and "abnormal" desires (ex. 9).

These conspicuous markers of Diane's authenticity, and the seemingly unpremeditated, almost improvisatory quality of their appearance, reinforce her "break" with her poised Mozartian persona, a rhetorical strategy that has the effect of neutralizing the theatrical character of the movement's opening phrases. Indeed, when the theme of the Mozart divertimento ultimately returns (two measures before rehearsal no. 42), a listener may well be perplexed by the simultaneity of Diane's apparent engagement with this music, as well as her ostensible distance from it. It is this "double aspect" of the Andante that positions it as an instance of camp aesthetics, especially in the way that the movement articulates the dualism between self-presentation and theatricality that informs the strategy of "passing." In her fluid maneuvering between the feminine world evoked by the pastoral innocence of Poulenc's Mozartian reminiscence and that of the masculinized virtuosity and chromatic inflections that have characterized her from the outset of the ballet, Poulenc reveals the erotic dissonances that tear at Diane. It is this anxious combination of antitheses, along with the concomitant necessity of consistently renewed (re)negotations of identity as defined by social performance, that serve to dramatically highlight Diane's incongruity. The goddess of chastity here in this Andante emerges as a queer figure;



Example 9. Poulenc, *Aubade*, "Andante," mm. 23–35.

she is authentic and theatrical at the same time, a camp emblem of contradictions craftly dissimulated behind the alibi of mythological convention.

Writing to André Schaeffner, Poulenc explained that his ballet was not informed by "pathos," but rather by "*acquiescent pain*."[131] Although the work's critics did not attempt to query the source of the composer's hurt, they were unanimous in recognizing the unexpected maturity and seriousness of Poulenc's new ballet. André Coeuroy praised *Aubade* for revealing "a humanity we have not seen in the music of Poulenc, a maturity of thought and sentiment that is beginning to flourish."[132] André George, writing for *Les Nouvelles Littéraires*, also lauded this humanity, and spoke of *Aubade* as a "generous indication of what

Francis Poulenc is capable of."[133] Indeed, as Coeuroy wrote in a review of the work's first public performance, the "sensitive humanity" of Poulenc's new ballet "raises it above *Les Biches* and the *Concert champêtre*, works in which, all the same, this ballet's roots are to be found."[134] Poulenc himself was conscious that *Aubade* had cast a subdued pall over the surreal revelers who had attended the Materials Ball. As the composer reported to Claire Croiza, "Those who have heard it are both a little surprised and upset that the 'charming Poulenc' has this time brought them to tears."[135]

In his ambiguously outlined scenario, Poulenc never reveals precisely what delights await Diane beyond the public realm of her Arcadian glade. The "burning love that ravishes her purity" is never named or represented; only the comparatively "masculine" music that accompanies the heroine's appearances, along with the incongruous revelations of the Andante, indirectly suggest the queer nature of Diane's sexual preferences. In 1954, however, Poulenc for once sought to dispel any ambiguity when he insisted that his ballet was "about women, about feminine solitude" and expressed his disapproval toward any adaptations that sought to alter his original conception.[136]

If Poulenc defended his original idea so strongly, it was perhaps because *Aubade* had been so extraordinarily manhandled in the decades after its premiere. Indeed, the composer's work, at least the version choreographed by Nijinska and danced by Anna Ludmilova in the role of Diane at the Materials Ball, was never performed publically in Paris or elsewhere.[137] For the public premiere on 1 December 1929, conducted by Ansermet with Poulenc at the piano, *Aubade* was presented simply as a piano concerto. Although Poulenc's scenario was printed in the program, little heed was paid to it. Critics like André Coeuroy claimed that the work "exists in itself, independently of its choreographic program."[138] Other reviewers, such as Robert Caby or Paul Le Flem, seemed equally unconcerned with its narrative premise and concentrated primarily on descriptions and assessments of the work's orchestration, its indebtedness to Stravinsky, and its stylistic deviations from Poulenc's earlier works, *Les Biches* in particular.[139] This was the last time *Aubade* would be performed with clear reference to its program. The orchestral score, published in 1931, provides only the titles of each movement with no further comment; the reduction for piano solo (prepared by the composer) reproduces the ballet's scenario but indicates in the "Notes for Concert Performance" that "the choreographic explanations must on no account appear in concert programs."[140] It could be argued that Poulenc—who performed *Aubade* quite frequently throughout the 1930s as his career as a pianist

blossomed—sought to dissociate the work from its original revelatory context. If this indeed was the case, he was assisted by George Balanchine's unscrupulous transformation of the work's scenario for the staged public premiere at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées on 21 January 1930:

> A Greek myth; at dawn, the hunter Actaeon surprises the goddess Diana bathing; she transforms him into a deer, wounds him, and turning her companions into dogs, sets them upon him. With a pang of regret, the goddess resumes her course through the forest; day has come.[141]

In the *Entretiens avec Claude Rostand*, Poulenc admitted that he had "weakly submitted" to accepting Balanchine's revision, but maintained that the intrusion of Actaeon upon the poetic premise of his "feminine ballet" was both "idiotic" and "blandly academic."[142] Such comments tend to support an interpretation of the ballet's heroine as a figure of ambiguous sexuality. Why, then, did the composer accept Balanchine's modifications in the first place? Certainly, Poulenc had felt comfortable with the idea of presenting *Aubade* in the semiprivate and extremely select context of Marie de Noailles's salon. Some of the guests present at the Materials Ball (like writer Valentine Hugo) were, after all, already aware of Poulenc's "big secret" and may have suspected that the composer's crisis had found its way into the expressive fabric of the work. In the public sphere, however, Poulenc was much more cautious about how *Aubade* could be interpreted, particularly with regard to its narrative content. In an interview from April 1929, one can sense a little of the composer's circumspection in the way he curtly simplifies *Aubade*'s synopsis:

> I have a little scenario: the dawn. It takes place between 4:00 and 5:30 in the morning. Four women and a Poussin-inspired backdrop. . . . A lively Diane, a little bit . . . neurotic. . . . She leaves . . . the women fall back asleep.[143]

Whether this minimalist description represents an attempt to dissimulate the work's personal and homoerotic content is impossible to establish. In any case, if Poulenc later regretted the ways he lost control of his ballet's destiny, there is no evidence to suggest that in the early 1930s, he was particularly distressed about Balanchine's obfuscation of the work's original narrative premise.

Indeed, if works like *Les Biches* and *Aubade* reveal the composer's acute interest in themes of sexual ambiguity and his motivation to covertly communicate his sensibility, during the remainder of the 1930s,

Poulenc's music initiates a notable retreat from any further explorations, covert or overt, of his "big secret." Though *Le Bal masqué*, a "profane cantata" composed in 1931, reconnects with the "masked ball" theme that had informed *Aubade* and, to a lesser degree, *Les Biches*, the surrealist poetry of Max Jacob upon which it was based does not easily yield significant biographical disclosures. In fact, *Le Bal masqué*, composed for a party held at the Noailles Cubist villa in Hyères, is primarily nostalgic in the way that it stylistically recalls the fairground aesthetics that had played such a large role in popularizing Les Six in the early 1920s. Significantly, Poulenc did not immediately follow the path of "humanity" and "maturity" many had perceived in *Aubade*, and his "regression" to an earlier compositional style in *Le Bal masqué* initiated a considerable distancing from the sexual poetics around which his two ballets had been conceived. Clearly, unlike his friend Jean Cocteau, and contrary to the unprecedented example set by André Gide in works like *Corydon* and *Les Faux-Monnayeurs* (*The Counterfeiters*), Poulenc was neither prepared nor inclined to render the relationship between his works and his sexual life publicly transparent.[144] As he wrote to Claire Croiza in 1929, he was "too respectful of the secrets of the heart to speak about anything to anybody," and indeed for the remainder of his creative life, Poulenc would be burdened by deeply contradictory impulses: wishing to keep his homosexuality secret in the public sphere while simultaneously using this "secret" as the expressive impulse that animated his musical works.[145]

Poulenc's inner migration toward the gay closet may have been precipitated by the hardening of French homophobia throughout the 1930s, as well as by the general shift in artistic and aesthetic values at that time. The carefree world of 1920s costume parties and surreal hostesses was replaced by the economically austere and politically volatile years of the Great Depression and the Second World War. Notably, in 1936, Poulenc wrote with sadness to Georges Auric that "obviously, we aren't living at a time when good spirits are enough to make things better."[146] Indeed, the composer's rededication to the Roman Catholicism of his childhood that same year could be viewed as a shift toward a serious and spiritual aesthetic free of the eroticized inspiration of his early works. However, as Burton has suggested, Poulenc's religiosity may be perhaps most profitably viewed in terms of what Mark Jordan has referred to as "clerical camp," especially in the ways that the composer attempts to straddle the ostensibly irreconcilable but complementary realms of gay desire and Catholic devotion.[147]

As such, the camp strategies initiated in *Les Biches* and *Aubade* emerge as significant factors in Poulenc's creative evolution. Whereas *Les Biches* confirms that Poulenc was naturally inclined to expressions of

the sexually liminal, *Aubade* reveals the extent to which the "double aspect" of camp allowed for a particularly moving examination of the composer's own sexual insecurities and anxieties. Ultimately, Poulenc's lifelong use of "secrets" as musical inspiration may be viewed as a trait that unifies his output and thereby challenges the oft-emphasized *moine et voyou* division. In what other ways can certain of the composer's bawdy pronouncements about works that ostensibly do not invite such readings be understood? For example, his *L'Embarquement pour Cythère* of 1951 could, he wrote to gay piano duo Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale, "give you a really good hard-on, so long as you don't play this dissolute idyll too fast."[148] Even *Dialogues des Carmélites*, an opera the composer publicly claimed to be a study on the sacred mystery of the transference of grace, could also cover up deep secrets linked to the "mysteries" of queer desire.[149] Indeed, the composer was overjoyed with a performance of that work in Catania because, as he wrote in a letter to Claude Rostand, "there was inspired sperm in the air, even under the costumes."[150] Ultimately, camp's Janus-face—its ability to present a "straight" public meaning while surreptitiously expressing the joys and sorrows of a queer life—lies at the very heart of Poulenc's "amphibian" compositional aesthetic.

Notes

Christopher Moore is an assistant professor of musicology at the University of Ottawa. His research focuses on French music of the twentieth century, with particular emphasis on issues of politics, gender, identity, and criticism during the interwar period. Recent writing includes essays on composers Francis Poulenc, Charles Koechlin, and Darius Milhaud. E-mail: christopher.moore@uottawa.ca.

1. "Who will ever know the secret of certain works?" Poulenc to Simone Girard, 31 October 1955, in Francis Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, ed. Myriam Chimènes (Paris: Fayard, 1994), 831. All translations from the French are mine unless otherwise noted.

2. Ned Rorem, *The Paris Diaries of Ned Rorem* (New York: George Braziller, 1996), 211.

3. On Poulenc's stay in Cannes in March 1954, see Carl B. Schmidt, *Entrancing Muse: A Documented Biography of Francis Poulenc* (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2001), 400.

4. Poulenc, *Correspondance 1915–1963*, ed. Hélène de Wendel (Paris: Seuil, 1967). This issue is briefly discussed in Francis Poulenc, *Echo and Source: Selected Correspondance 1915–1963*, trans. and ed. Sidney Buckland (London: Victor Gollancz, 1991), 10–11.

5. Darius Milhaud, "Préface," in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1915–1963*, 5.

6. Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, op. cit.

7. Myriam Chimènes, "Introduction," in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 27–28.

8. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 5–8. See, for example, Jean Roy, *Francis Poulenc* (Paris: Seghers, 1964); Henri Hell, *Francis Poulenc: Musicien français* (Paris: Fayard, 1978); Renaud Machart, *Poulenc* (Paris: Seuil, 1995).

9. Claude Rostand, "Première audition du *Concerto* de Francis Poulenc," *Paris-Presse*, 26 July 1950.

10. Richard Burton, *Francis Poulenc* (Bath: Absolute Press, 2002), 15. Claude Rostand later reflected, "In an article I wrote a few years ago I discovered a formula of which I was quite proud and which went on to become famous since many of my colleagues have used it to death: Poulenc *moine et voyou*." See Claude Rostand's obituary of the composer, "Francis Poulenc: Hier et demain," *Le Figaro littéraire*, 7 February 1963.

11. Philip Brett and Elizabeth Wood, "Gay and Lesbian Music," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 2001), 9:598; Keith E. Clifton, "Mots Cachés: Autobiography in Cocteau's and Poulenc's *La Voix humaine*," *Canadian University Music Review* 22 (2001): 68–85; Steven Downes, *The Muse as Eros: Muse, Erotic Fantasy and Male Creativity in the Romantic and Modern Imagination* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006); Benjamin Ivry, *Francis Poulenc* (London: Phaidon Press, 1996); Burton, *Francis Poulenc*; and Schmidt, *Entrancing Muse*.

12. Poulenc to Valentine Hugo, 21 May 1929, in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 304, "Combien j'ai été heureux de pouvoir vous confier mon gros secret, mon grave secret." Little has been written about Richard Chanlaire. He made a living painting scarves that he sold during the summertime in a village outside of Nice. Stéphane Audel, who interviewed Poulenc on a number of occasions, first met Chanlaire in 1954 and described him as being "extremely ugly; he has an overbite, is crosseyed, has an inaudible voice, and his bereaved fingernails already look like those of an old man." See Malou Haine, "*Mon irrésistible, insupportable et cher Poulenc* . . . Poulenc à travers le *Journal intime* de son ami Stéphane Audel," *Les Cahiers du CIREM* 49–50–51 (2004): 172.

13. Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*. "Je suis sûr que vous avez raison: j'irai à Venise."

14. Gilles Barbedette and Michel Carassou, *Gay Paris 1925* (Paris: Presses de la Renaissance, 1981), 14; Florence Tamagne, *A History of Homosexuality in Europe*, vol. 2: *Berlin, London, Paris 1919–1939* (New York: Agora, 2004), 176–99.

15. Laure Murat, *La loi du genre: Une histoire culturelle du "troisième sexe"* (Paris: Fayard, 2006), 22.

16. Martha Hanna, "Natalism, Homosexuality, and the Controversy over *Corydon*," in *Homosexuality in Modern France*, ed. Jeffrey Merrick and Bryant T. Ragan Jr. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 202–5.

17. For an overview, contexualization, and selection of important writings on camp, see *Camp: Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject: A Reader*, ed. Fabio Cleto (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002). Other studies not excerpted in that collection but which have been helpful to my own work include Gary McMahon, *Camp in Literature* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2006); George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890–1940* (New York: Basic

Books, 1994); *Camp Grounds: Style and Homosexuality*, ed. David Bergman (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1993); Michael Bronski, *Culture Clash: The Making of Gay Sensibility* (Boston: South End Press, 1994).

18. For a discussion, see Fabio Cleto, "Introduction: Queering the Camp," in *Camp: Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject*, 16–17, passim.

19. For a particularly successful examination of camp as historical practice, see Steven Cohan, *Incongruous Entertainment: Camp, Cultural Value, and the MGM Musical* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2005), 5–19.

20. Matthew Tinkcom, "Warhol's Camp," in *Camp: Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject*, 345–46.

21. Tinkcom, "Warhol's Camp," 345.

22. Cohan, *Incongruous Entertainment*, 13.

23. Cohan, *Incongruous Entertainment*, 18.

24. Susan Sontag, "Notes on Camp," in *A Susan Sontag Reader* (New York: Vintage, 1983), 106.

25. Sontag, "Notes on Camp," 116–17.

26. Cited in Maryvonne de Saint-Pulgent, "Poulenc, un musicien anachronique?" in *L'Avant-Scène Opéra—Dialogues des Carmélites* (1983), 99. "M. Francis Poulenc travaille dans le vieux neuf, dans le déjà dit, dans le lieu commun qu'il exploite avec une sorte d'impudeur dont on serait enclin à juger qu'elle frise l'inconscience."

27. Francis Poulenc, *Entretiens avec Claude Rostand* (Paris: René Julliard, 1954), 16. "C'est d'elle que je tiens ce goût pour ce que j'ai baptisé 'l'adorable mauvaise musique.'"

28. Daniel Albright, *Untwisting the Serpent: Modernism in Music, Literature, and Other Arts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 292.

29. Cleto, "Introduction: Queering the Camp," 24. Also see Cohan, *Incongruous Entertainment*, 24–28.

30. Cited in Philip Core, "Camp: The Lie That Tells the Truth," in *Camp: Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject*, 81.

31. Myriam Chimènes, "Poulenc and His Patrons: Social Convergences," trans. Sidney Buckland, in *Francis Poulenc: Music, Art and Literature*, ed. Sidney Buckland and Myriam Chimènes (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 1999), 212.

32. Cited in Ivry, *Francis Poulenc*, 43.

33. For a photo of the composer in drag, see Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, plate 18.

34. Schmidt, *Entrancing Muse*, 169n72. On Madame Cardinal's party, see Michel de Cossart, *The Food of Love: Princesse Edmond de Polignac (1865–1943) and Her Salon* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1978), 158.

35. Colette, *Chéri* (Paris: Arthème Fayard, 1920), 5–7.

36. Ned Rorem, *Settling the Score: Essays on Music* (New York: Anchor Books, 1988), 126.

37. See Lawrence D. Mass, "A Conversation with Ned Rorem," in *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology*, ed. Philip Brett, Elizabeth Wood, and Gary C. Thomas, 2nd ed. (New York and London: Routledge, 2006), 90.

38. Poulenc, *Entretiens*, 19–20. Poulenc's mother is named on the dedication page of *Dialogues des Carmélites*, along with Monterverdi, Verdi, Debussy, and Moussorgsky.

39. See the letter from Poulenc to Hervé Dugardin, 30 March 1958, in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*. "Blanche c'était moi et elle c'est encore moi . . ." (Blanche was me and "Elle" is me once again . . .).

40. See Esther Newton, *Mother Camp: Female Impersonators in America* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972).

41. Bronislava Nijinska (1891–1972), sister of Vaslav Nijinsky, first danced with the Ballets Russes in 1909. In 1921, she began choreographing works for Daighilev including Stravinsky's *Renard* (1922) and *Les Noces* (1923), George Auric's *Les Fâcheux* (1924), and Milhaud's *Le Train bleu* (1924). Marie Laurencin (1895–1956) was a French painter. She also designed the set for *L'Eventail de Jeanne* (1927), a collective ballet in ten movements for which Poulenc contributed a *Pastourelle*.

42. See the letter from Diaghilev to Poulenc, 15 November 1921, in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 138.

43. Poulenc to Milhaud, in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 160. "Nous allons peut-être faire une suite de danses sans livret."

44. Poulenc reorchestrated *Les Biches* in 1939–40. At this time, he also pared down the complete ballet to create an orchestral suite that omits the movements requiring a chorus ("Chanson dansée," "Jeu," and "Petite chanson dansée"). The 1924 orchestration was never published; however, a piano-vocal score was published a few months after the premiere by Heugel. For further details, see Carl B. Schmidt, *The Music of Francis Poulenc (1899–1963): A Catologue* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 100–13.

45. Poulenc to Charles Koechlin, 27 October 1923, in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 212. "Diaghilev veut que je parte cette semaine pour Monte-Carlo afin de surveiller la chorégraphie."

46. Poulenc to Milhaud, November 1923, in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 213. "La chorégraphie des *Biches* est, chose surprenante, *ravissante*. Nijinska a cette fois vraiment compris ma musique."

47. Poulenc to Paul Collaer, 8 January 1924, in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 220–21. "Songez qu'on n'a pas répété moins de 72 fois soit environ 250 heures de travail."

48. The movements are Overture; Rondeau; Chanson dansée; Adagietto; Jeu; Rag-Mazurka; Andantino; Petite chanson dansée; Final.

49. Henry Malherbe, "Chronique musicale: Au Théâtre des Champs-Élysées: Ballets russes," *Le Temps*, 11 June 1924: "Jules Lemaître n'a-t-il pas dit: J'admettrias fort aisément qu'un ballet se passât de livret, n'exprimât rien de précis ni de suivi, ne fût qu'une succession de 'figures' plaisantes aux regards?' C'est le dessein que M. Poulenc a pris et suivi . . . L'atmosphère s'est substituée à l'action commes dans *Les Sylphides* ou la *Suite de danses*."

50. Raoul Brunel, "Au Théâtre des Champs-Élysées—Ballets russes," *L'Oeuvre*, 28 May 1924. "Une fantaisie chorégraphique dont le sens n'est pas très clair."

51. Lydia Sokolova, *Dancing for Diaghilev: The Memoirs of Lydia Sokolova*, ed. Richard Buckle (San Francisco: Mercury House, 1960), 215.

52. Louis Laloy, "Sur la Côte d'Azur—*Les Biches*," *Comoedia*, 11 January 1924. "Ces jeunes filles en rose, d'un rose de fleurs de pêcher, sortent d'un désoeuvrement aimable pour s'amuser sans trop savoir de quoi, nouant des rondes interrompues qui réunissent et dispersent leur troupeau agile et craintif."

53. André Coeuroy, "Jeune Musique française: *Salade, Les Biches, Les Fâcheux*," *La Revue universelle*, 1 August 1924, 382. "Pour la Chanson dansée, des chanteurs sont mêlés à l'orchestre et pendant que bondissent trois athlètes bleus au milieu des biches roses ils chantent une chanson d'allure populaire."

54. Adolphe Boschot, "La Musique—Ballets russes—deux oeuvres sur trois sont agréables," *Echo de Paris*, 28 May 1924. "Le torse est gainé de bleu; la veste collante s'arrête court. Les jambes n'ont que le maillot. Quand la danseuse les raidit et marche sur les pointes en imitant le pas de parade, elle obtient des effets d'une cocasserie irrésistible."

55. Malherbe, "Chronique musicale." "Sa grâce ambiguë a tout de suite séduit l'athlète le plus plaisant et le plus racé."

56. Louis Laloy, "Les Premières: Théatre de Monte-Carlo," *Le Figaro*, 10 January 1924. "On se prend, on se quitte, on s'intrigue, on déplace le canapé, on s'en sert comme d'un tremplin, on rit comme rit la jeunesse."

57. Poulenc, *Entretiens*, 53. "Cette dame du *Rag-Mazurka* à mi-chemin entre le Casino et la maison de rendez-vous."

58. Laloy, "Sur la Côte d'Azur—*Les Biches*." "Deux jeunes filles en gris dansent ensemble, non pas élancées mais suavement rapprochées."

59. Coeuroy, "Jeune Musique française: *Salade, Les Biches, Les Fâcheux*," 382. "Le finale qui résume, sous la variété des rythmes, l'unité de l'inspiration."

60. Poulenc, *Entretiens*, 52. "J'estimais que cela suffisait à créer l'atmsophère érotique que je souhaitais: l'atmosphère de mes vingt ans."

61. Poulenc to Diaghilev, December 1923, in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 218–19. "Écoutez bien: estimant que le canapé est une 'étoile' au même titre qu'elle, elle le fait danser pendant tout le jeu!!! . . . Dans un mouvement 'Presto' les danseuses s'asseyent, sautent en l'air, retombent sur le capiton, se roulent sur le dos, cependant que les deux messieurs enjambent le dossier, ensuite on tire le malheureux canapé, qui devra être ultra-solide, dans tous les sens. Quand au milieu la musique se calme l'Etoile et Wilzak se pelotent en scène. Les Biches alors se servant du canapé (qui est dos au public) comme d'un observatoire passent la tête au-dessus du dossier puis se cachent—et quand le jeu reprend, *écoutez-moi bien*, les deux homes retournent vivement le canapé et on voit couchées deux dames dans une position que je qualifierai de tête à queue en pensant à Barbette." Barbette, the stage name of Vander Clyde (1899–1973), was an American circus performer known for his cross-dressing trapeze and high-wire acts. He first performed in Paris in 1923.

62. Lynn Garafola, *Diaghilev's Ballets Russes* (New York: Da Capo, 1998), 129–30.

63. Poulenc, *Entretiens*, 52. "J'eus l'idée de ces 'fêtes galantes 1923' où l'on pouvait, comme dans certains tableaux de Watteau, ne rien voir ou imaginer le pire."

64. Jack Babuscio, "Camp and the Gay Sensibility," in *Gays and Film*, ed. Richard Dyer (New York: Zoetrope, 1984), 46.

65. Poulenc, *Entretiens*, 52.

66. Jules Méry, "Les Biches; Les Tentations de la Bergère," *Petit Monégasque*, 3 January 1924. "Les Sylphides, c'étaient des femmes-papillons dans un clair de lune romantique. Ici ce sont des femmes habituées aux Rolls-Royce et aux colliers de perles de chez Cartier."

67. *Les Sylphides* was still regularly performed by the Ballets Russes throughout the 1920s. See Jane Pritchard, "Serge Diaghilev's Ballets Russes: An Itinerary. Part II," *Dance Research* 27, no. 2 (2009): 255–360. Pritchard's article includes a photograph (Fig. 5) of a staging of *Les Sylphides* taken at Montreux in 1923.

68. Robert Brussel, "Les Théâtres," *Le Figaro*, 30 May 1924. "Bien que ce soit aller à l'aventure que de définir le sujet d'un tel divertissement, *Les Biches* pourraient être dénommées *Les Sylphides dans le hall de la Couturière*."

69. Laloy, "Les Premières: Théâtre de Monte-Carlo." "Et c'est une leçon d'amour, non pas dans quelque parc suranné, mais dans une chambre rendue chimérique par cette fenêtre aux rideaux vaporeux."

70. Brussel, "Les Théâtres." "A l'harmonie tout en blanc des romantiques *Sylphides*, s'oppose l'harmonie tout en rose et celle-ci est exquise." See also Garafola, *Diaghilev's Ballets Russes*, 129.

71. A photo of Alicia Markova dancing the role of the Woman in Blue in a London production from the early 1930s is reproduced in Ivry, *Francis Poulenc*, 55. Michel Fokine's *Les Sylphides* (1909), sometimes referred to as *Chopiniana*, was inspired by August Bournonville's *La Sylphide* but should not be confused with it.

72. Louis Schneider, "La première soirée des Ballets russes," *Le Gaulois*, 28 May 1924. "Combien Mlle Nemtchinova a montré le talent féminin, de souplesse et de vigueur mâles aussi, dans le rôle du gandin!"

73. Sokolova, *Dancing for Diaghilev*, 215.

74. Garafola, *Diaghilev's Ballets Russes*, 132.

75. Jean Cocteau, "Deux ballets actuels," *Revue de Paris*, 15 June 1924, 912. "L'entrée de Nemtchinova est proprement sublime."

76. Cocteau, "Deux ballets actuels," 912. "Lorsque cette petite dame sort de la coulisse, sur ses pointes, avec de longues jambes, un justaucorps trop court, et la main droite, gantée de blanc, mise près de la joue comme pour une espèce de salut militaire, mon cœur bat plus vite ou s'arrête de battre. Ensuite, un goût sans fléchissement combine les pas classiques et les gestes neufs."

77. Babuscio, "Camp and the Gay Sensibility," 46.

78. Poulenc to Diaghilev, 24 September 1922, in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 178. "Mon numéro III (solo de l'étoile) est enfin trouvé mais que cela a été dur! J'espère maintenant avoir évité la valse 1830, la valse 1870, l'adagio italien, la 'fausses

notes valse' Casella et la valse triste (*Parade*). C'est d'ailleurs une danse 2/4 très souple, très *dansante* et andantino qui commence en *si b* puis se livre à des modulations les plus imprévues. Je suis sûr que c'est ce qu'il faut."

79. André Levinson, "Les Biches," *Comoedia*, 21 January 1924. "L'entrée de la très intétessante Véra Nemtchinova . . . tenant du page, du chasseur et de l'acrobate . . . n'est pas du tout indifférente."

80. Poulenc, *Entretiens*, 55. "C.R.—Ne m'avez-vous pas dit que l'Adagietto des *Biches* vous avait été suggéré par une variation de *La Belle au bois dormant*? F.P.—Oui, très exactement."

81. Keith W. Daniel, *Francis Poulenc: His Artistic Development and Musical Style* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1982), 286.

82. Poulenc, *Entretiens*, 55. "N'oubliez pas qu'en 1923, Tchaikowsky, enchantement de ma jeunesse, venait d'être dédouané par Strawinsky."

83. Poulenc, *Entretiens*, 55.

84. Francis Poulenc, "Igor Stravinsky," *L'Information musicale* (1939): 195. For Poulenc's critical appraisal of *Mavra*, see his article in *Les Feuilles libres* 27 (June–July 1922): 223–24.

85. Poulenc to Milhaud, August 1922, in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 174; Poulenc, "Igor Stravinsky," 195.

86. Garafola, *Diaghilev's Ballets Russes*, 131.

87. Garafola, *Diaghilev's Ballets Russes*, 131–32.

88. Jules Méry, "Les Biches; Les Tentations de la Bergère," *Petit Monégasque*, 3 January 1924. "La chorégraphie de Mme Nijinska dont je saurais trop me louer, est entièrement basée sur la technique classique, pointes, arabesques, grands jetés, etc."

89. Wilfrid Mellers, *Francis Poulenc* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 20.

90. Michael J. Puri, "Dandy, Interrupted: Sublimation, Repression, and Self-Portraiture in Maurice Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé* (1909–1912)," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 60, no. 2 (2007): 321–26.

91. Malherbe, "Chronique musicale." "Une jeune femme si maigre et si droite qu'on la prendrait pour un adolescent s'est dépouilée hardiment de ses jupes."

92. Garafola, *Diaghilev's Ballets Russes*, 131.

93. Levinson, "Les Biches." "Dandinement et déhanchement buté et incolore."

94. Garafola, *Diaghilev's Ballets Russes*, 131.

95. Daniel, *Francis Poulenc: His Artistic Development and Musical Style*, 288.

96. Brussel, "Les Théâtres." "L'esprit qui allait s'attacher à la cadence d'un pas moderne, le voit soudain rajeuni ou vieilli d'un demi-siècle, par le rappel fugitif d'une vieille chanson, puis remis au goût du jour par le mètre obstiné du Rag Mazurka."

97. Francis Poulenc, "Francis Poulenc on His Ballets," *Ballet*, September 1946, 58.

98. Poulenc, *Entretiens*, 54. "La danse des deux femmes en gris, simple pas de deux féminin, est devenue une danse très secrètement proustienne (Albertine et une amie à Balbec)."

99. Marcel Proust, *À la recherche du temps perdu*, vol. 4: *Sodome et Gomorrhe*, ed. Antoine Compagnon (Paris: Gallimard, 1988), 191. "'Tenez, regardez,' ajouta-t-il en me montrant Albertine et Andrée qui valsaient lentement, serrées l'une contre l'autre, 'j'ai oublié mon lorgnon et je ne vois pas bien, mais elles sont certainement au comble de la jouissance. On ne sait pas assez que c'est surtout par les seins que les femmes l'éprouvent. Et voyez, les leurs se touchent complètement.' En effet, le contact n'avait pas cessé entre ceux d'Andrée et ceux d'Albertine. Je ne sais si elles entendirent ou devinèrent la réflexion de Cottard, mais elles se détachèrent légèrement l'une de l'autre tout en continuant de valser. Andrée dit à ce moment un mot à Albertine et celle-ci rit du même rire pénétrant et profond que j'avais entendu tout à l'heure. Mais le trouble qu'il m'apporta cette fois ne me fut plus cruel; Albertine avait l'air d'y montrer, de faire constater à Andrée quelque frémissement voluptueux et secret."

100. Malherbe, "Chronique musicale." "Une brune et une blonde, aux cheveux courts, énamourées, enlacées, ne s'intéressent pas, non plus, de leur côté, aux hommes qui tournent tumultueusement."

101. Poulenc wrote to Stravinsky to tell him that he found the texts at the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF). See Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 169.

102. The piano vocal score of the complete ballet (revised edition of 1947) states that the texts are "based" on popular French songs. See Francis Poulenc, *Les Biches, ballet avec chant en un acte, musique et textes d'après des chansons populaires françaises de Francis Poulenc* (Paris: Huegel, 1924).

103. Puri, "Dandy, Interrupted," 331.

104. Raoul Brunel wrote that "the chorus, placed in the pit, is supposed to comment on the action but all of this is in vain, for we cannot hear it well and make out the words it was given to sing." See "Ballets Russes: *Les Tentations de la Bergère*; *Les Biches*; *Noces*," *L'Oeuvre*, 28 May 1924. "Des choeurs placés dans l'orchestre sont censés commenter l'action, bien inutilement du reste, car on entend mal et on ne distingue rien des paroles qui leur sont confiées."

105. Sokolova, *Dancing for Diaghilev*, 216–17.

106. "À propos de l'art depouillé. Les ballets russes au théâtre des Champs-Elysées: *Les Biches*, ballet de Francis Poulenc; *Le Train bleu*, opérette dansée de Darius Milhaud. Festival Mozart. La Musique des Guides de Paris," *Éclair*, 23 June 1924. Press clipping in Collection Montpensier, Département de Musique, BnF. The author of this article has not been identified. "On pourra les conduire sans inquiétude au ballet des *Biches*: elles n'y verront que du feu. Mais quel beau feu!"

107. Mellers, *Francis Poulenc*, 17.

108. Gérard d'Houville, "Mes Spectacles," *Le Gaulois*, 7 June 1924. "C'est un charme qui sied à des jeunes filles qui, elles, sont à l'état de ce que les anciens nommaient 'nymphes.'"

109. Malherbe, "Chronique musicale." "N'arrachons pas le masque de naïveté voulue à cet ouvrage plein de langueur libertine."

110. Malherbe, "Chronique musicale." "Les spectatrices écoutent l'ouvrage, dont la forme néo-classique enveloppe finement le vif érotisme."

111. Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet*, 156.

112. Laurence Benaïm, *Marie Laure de Noailles: La Vicomtesse du bizarre* (Paris: Grasset, 2001), 188.

113. For photos of the event, see Jean-Louis de Faucigny-Lucinge, *Legendary Parties* (New York: Vendome Press, 1987), 71–79.

114. A photograph of Frank's stage design is reproduced in Ivry, *Francis Poulenc*, 72–73.

115. Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 300n1.

116. On Linossier, see Sophie Robert, "Raymonde Linossier: 'Lovely Soul Who Was My Flame,'" in *Francis Poulenc: Music, Art and Literature*, 87–139.

117. Poulenc to Valentine Hugo, 21 May 1929, in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 304. Poulenc also informed Wanda Landowska, 305. "Combien j'ai été heureux de pouvoir vous confier mon gros secret, mon grave secret. Cet amour *fou* mais si angoissant dont je vous ai entretenu étant maintenant *l'unique* raison d'être de ma vie vous comprenez combien à cause de son anamolie, il m'est dur de le cacher."

118. Poulenc to Richard Chanlaire, 18 June 1929, in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 305. "Garde-la avec soin car c'est un genre de souvenir qui vous émeut parfois quand longtemps après on le retrouve oublié au fond d'un placard. Je t'embrasse tendrement toi qui es ce que j'ai de plus cher au monde."

119. Cited in Schmidt, *The Music of Francis Poulenc*, 161.

120. Francis Poulenc, *Aubade, concerto chorégraphique pour piano et dix-huit instruments: réduction pour piano solo par l'auteur* (Paris: Salabert, 1930). This edition, the only one in which Poulenc's scenario was ever printed, includes an English translation from which I have partly adapted my own.

121. Mellers, *Francis Poulenc*, 27; Burton, *Francis Poulenc*, 40. For similar comments, see Ivry, *Francis Poulenc*, 71; James Harding, *The Ox on the Roof: Scenes from the Musical Life in Paris in the Twenties* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1972), 223–24.

122. Burton, *Francis Poulenc*, 40–41.

123. Poulenc, *Entretiens*, 80. "C'est ainsi que naquit cette œuvre amphibie."

124. Albright, *Untwisting the Serpent*, 250.

125. Mellers, *Francis Poulenc*, 27.

126. Paul Le Flem, "Des programmes remplis à souhait," *Comoedia*, 2 December 1929. "M. Poulenc a écrit une musique qui . . . ne dédaigne pas, à l'occasion, la tendre romance sentimentale, allant gentiment en visite chez dame Domininate."

127. Poulenc to Charles de Noailles, 16 July 1928, in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 284–85. "L'idée de ce divertissement pour pucelles de 16 ans m'excite à tel point que je crains horriblement pour ma vertu!!"

128. The final version omitted the tuba and added two violas. The second oboe doubles as English horn.

129. Poulenc to de Noailles, 16 July 1928, in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 285. "Si vous détestez l'un de ces instruments dites-le moi, si j'en ai omis que vous aimiez prévenez-moi. L'archevêque de Salzbourg adorait les cors de basset. Mozart en introduisait deux dans un divertissement qu'il écrivait pour lui. Comme je suis hélas loin d'être Mozart vous comprendrez aisément que je sois encore plus docile que lui."

130. Mellers, *Francis Poulenc*, 29.

131. Poulenc to André Schaeffner, 11 November 1929, in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 315. "Voulez-vous souligner la *nouveauté d'accent* de cette œuvre dans ma production, insiter plus sur la *douleur résignée* d'*Aubade* que sur le côté pathétique."

132. André Coeuroy, "Francis Poulenc: *Aubade* (Orchestre Symphonique de Paris)," *La Revue musicale*, January 1930, 67. "L'évidence d'une humanité que nous n'avions pas encore rencontrée dans la musique de Poulenc, d'une maturité de pensée et de sentiment qui commence à donner ses plus beaux fruits." For similar comments, see Henri Sauguet, "Quatre concerts à l'Orchestre symphonique—Le Groupe des Six," *L'Europe nouvelle*, 18 December 1929; André George, "La Musique," *Les Nouvelles Littéraires*, 14 December 1929.

133. George, "La Musique." "Je crois pourtant que le nouvel ouvrage est plus significatif et qu'il témoigne plus généreusement de ce que peut nous donner Francis Poulenc."

134. André Coeuroy, "Musique," *Paris-Midi*, 2 December 1929. "L'absence concertée de 'bravoure technique' s'accorde au mieux avec cette sensible humanité qui hausse l'*Aubade* au-dessus des *Biches* et du *Concert champêtre*, où poutant elle plonge encore ses racines."

135. Poulenc to Claire Croiza, August 1929, in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 309. "Les gens qui l'ont entendue sont à la fois un peu surpris et vexés que le 'charmant Poulenc' les incite cette fois aux pleurs."

136. Poulenc, *Entretiens*, 81. "*Aubade* est un ballet de femmes, de solitude féminine."

137. For a photo of Ludmilova in costume as Diane, see Faucigny-Lucinge, *Legendary Parties*, 76.

138. Coeuroy, "Francis Poulenc: *Aubade*," 67–68. "Écrite il y a six mois pour un divertissement dansé chez le Vicomte de Noailles (auquel elle est dédiée), l'oeuvre existe par elle-même, indépendamment de son argument chorégraphique."

139. Robert Caby, "Premières auditions," *L'Humanité*, 29 December 1929; Paul Le Flem, "Des programmes remplis à souhait," *Comoedia*, 2 December 1929. Just as *Les Biches* owes a tremendous creative debt to Stravinsky's works of the early 1920s, *Aubade* seems to have been partly inspired by the Russian composer's *Apollon musagète*, first performed in 1928. The ending of both works reveal striking musical similarties.

140. Francis Poulenc, *Aubade, Concerto chorégraphique pour piano et dix-huit instruments: partition d'orchestre* (Paris: Rouart, Lerolle, 1931); Poulenc, *Aubade: Réduction pour piano solo*. The solo piano version, apart from providing the scenario, also includes precise indications concerning the staging, and clarifies some of the relationships between the music and the choreography.

141. George Balanchine, *Choreography by George Balanchine: A Catalogue of Works* (New York: Eakins Press Foundation, 1983), 95.

142. Poulenc, *Entretiens*, 80–81. "J'ai eu la faiblesse d'accepter un argument de Balanchine tiré du mythe de Diane et d'Actéon. Cet argument, platement académique, a été repris ensuite, paresseusement, par maints chorégraphes. C'est idiot, car c'est à l'encontre de ma conception musicale."

143. *Guide du concert*, 29 April 1929, 855–57, cited in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 302n2. "J'ai un petit scénario: l'*Aube*. Cela se passe entre 4 h et 5 h 20 du matin. 4 femmes sur un fond à la Poussin . . . Une Diane vivante, quelque peu . . . nevrosée . . . Elle s'en va . . . les femmes se rendorment."

144. On Cocteau and Gide and the literary articulation of same-sex desire, see Lawrence R. Schehr, *French Gay Modernism* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004).

145. Poulenc to Claire Croiza, 29 April 1929, in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 303. "Je respecte trop les secrets du coeur pour jamais parler de quoi que ce soit à qui que ce fût."

146. Poulenc to Georges Auric, 25 August 1936, in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 425. "Je n'aime pas cette époque où on se sent si peu libre!!"

147. Burton, *Francis Poulenc*, 135n101; Mark D. Jordan, *The Silence of Sodom: Homosexuality in Modern Catholicism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

148. Poulenc to Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale, 1 November 1961, in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 985. "Pour que mes mauvais garçons bandent un bon coup, ne jouez pas trop vite cette crapuleuse idylle." Poulenc once described one of the modulations in the work as being as "thick as a guy's kiss" (985n2).

149. See Burton, *Francis Poulenc*, 90–108.

150. Poulenc to Claude Rostand, June 1959, in Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, 916. "À Catane il y avait du foutre, inspiré, dans l'air, voire sous les costumes."

Reaching a Plus Grand Public: *Georges Auric as Populist*

Colin Roust

> But isn't there an even vaster public [*un plus grand public*] who also have the right to share in the exultant joys [of our concerts]—and are we certain that everything is being done to allow them to do so? Alas! I know too well how fanciful these desires of ours can be and how the harsh reality too often condemns us to give up on what we most ardently wish to do. . . . It is not only cycling, rugby, or boxing matches that can make the people's hearts race. Still, it is necessary to let them know that there is a welcoming, generous art that demands only to be lavish for those who know and want to listen to its soothing splendors. . . . For the moment, I have only this to say: it is no longer a question of reserving for some people the joy of "our" music. Tomorrow more than ever, it must be, it will be the grand source of youth and strength, the harmonious dispenser of beauty and hope. May everybody, simply, choose to participate in a necessary work.[1]

Georges Auric wrote this in his article "La musique pour le grand public" for the weekly newspaper *La page musicale*, after attending a rehearsal of the Fauré Requiem by the Concerts Colonne in October 1937. For Auric, this call to action was no fanciful political statement. Instead, during the mid- to late 1930s, this populist message reshaped his musical career and had reverberations that lasted for the remaining four-and-a-half decades of his life.

Prior to his populist conversion, Auric was a central figure in the Parisian avant-garde of the 1910s and 1920s. As a fourteen-year-old, in October 1913, he played a piano recital for the Société Musicale Indépendante; the following spring, several of his songs were performed for the Société Nationale de Musique by Mme Paule de Lestang of the Lyon Opéra and Alfredo Casella. During the remainder of the decade, the child prodigy—now a protégé of Erik Satie's—moved easily among artists of all stripes, especially in the salons of Misia Sert, the Princesse

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de Polignac, the Comtesse de Beaumont, and the Vicomtesse de Noailles. During the 1920s, his music was strongly influenced by his friendships with Jean Cocteau, the other composers of Les Six, and the various artists and patrons of the Ballets Russes and the Ballets Suédois. His music was filled with a piquant, acidic sense of rebellion against the prevailing musical tradition, as embodied by composers such as Richard Wagner and Camille Saint-Saëns. A prolific music critic, he spared no ink when it came to those composers who failed to be original. His music, particularly the ballets and songs, was also rife with inside jokes shared in his circle of elite artists and aristocrats.

During the 1930s, however, Auric experienced a change of heart. After the poor reception of his Piano Sonata (1930–31), he went through a relatively fallow period creatively. Apart from the Sonata, the early 1930s were marked by virtually no music criticism and only a handful of compositions: incidental music for Marcel Achard's play *La femme silencieuse* (1930); the unpublished symphonic poem *La chaîne* (1931); "Scherzo" for Louise Dyer's collection of short pieces for penny-whistle, *Pipeaux 1934*; two ballets for the Ballets Russes de Monte-Carlo, *Concurrence* (1932) and *Les imaginaires* (1934); and three film scores for Cocteau's *Le sang d'un poète* (1930), René Clair's *A nous, la liberté!* (1931), and Mark Allégret's *Lac aux dames* (1934). His rejuvenation as an artist came in 1935, in part thanks to his affiliations with communist newspapers and journals, and with leftist organizations like the Association des Ecrivains et des Artistes Révolutionnaires (AEAR), the Maison de la Culture, and the Fédération Musicale Populaire. He became increasingly concerned with reaching new audiences and with the social utility of his music. Throughout the Popular Front years in France (roughly 1935–38), Auric participated in the "necessary work" by adopting four compositional strategies that would enable his music to reach the masses. First, he participated in collective organizations and projects with other left-leaning artists; second, he reached out to broader audiences through new genres; third, he wrote works specifically composed for young people; and finally, he expressed his political views in a much more overt manner, sometimes composing works with explicit political messages.

Collectivization

Auric rarely discussed his own political beliefs in any public forum. The opening quotation of this article notwithstanding, his convictions must be inferred from letters, the organizations to which he belonged, and his musical choices. In the early 1920s, Auric ridiculed Erik Satie's decision

to join the French Communist Party. During the 1930s, however, Auric had a change of heart. He published nearly three hundred musical critiques for the communist newspapers *Marianne* and *Paris-Soir*. He also contributed two articles to *Commune*, the journal of the AEAR, and one to *Les cahiers de la jeunesse*, a left-leaning journal supported by several of the most prominent figures in the Front Populaire government.[2] In addition to his role in the Fédération, Auric was a member of AEAR and the Paris Maison de la Culture.

These last three allegiances are crucial to understanding fully the signal changes in Auric's beliefs about the social role of music and the position of the composer in society. AEAR was a propaganda organization that provided a forum for French and Soviet artists to debate issues related to their work. The other two groups had specific social goals to bring the arts to the general public. Though these three cultural organizations had limited success in reaching the masses, they connected Auric with other leftist artists, exposed him to aesthetic debates about the intersection of art and politics, and provided him with opportunities to participate in collective projects. Among the most significant projects in which Auric participated were the 1936 revival of Romain Rolland's leftist play *Le Quatorze Juillet*; an album of piano pieces, *A l'exposition*, premiered by students of the pianist Marguerite Long at the 1937 Exposition Universelle;[3] and the 1938 film *La vie d'un homme*.

For Auric, such collective works were certainly not a new idea. After all, his fame in the 1920s and 1930s rested in no small part on the 1920 *Album des Six* (featuring piano pieces by Auric, Louis Durey, Honegger, Milhaud, Poulenc, and Tailleferre), the 1921 ballet *Les mariés de la Tour Eiffel* (with music by all of the Six except Durey), and the 1927 ballet *L'eventail de Jeanne* (featuring ten numbers, each by a different composer). However, the collective works of the mid- to late 1930s were composed with different aims and purposes, all of which were closely aligned with the goals of the leftist organizations to which Auric belonged.

Romain Rolland's 1901 play *Quatorze Juillet*, given in a new production on 14 July 1936, represents the ideals of leftist intellectuals more than any other artistic event that occurred during the Popular Front years. Sponsored by AEAR, this production brought together the talents of many leading artists: Pablo Picasso designed the curtain; Roger Désormière conducted the ensemble; Auric and six other members of the Fédération Musicale Populaire composed the incidental music.[4] The actors hailed from both the Comédie Française and the Fédération des Théâtres Indépendants de France. In addition, the Confédération Générale du Travail provided the extras and technical crew. In spite of considerable star power, there were no programs for the

presentation and the advertising conscientiously avoided hierarchical billing for any of the participants.[5] The play reenacts the events leading up to the 1789 storming of the Bastille. Judging by contemporary press accounts, few in the audience missed the performance's allegory, which characterized the Popular Front's 3 May 1936 election victory as a new French revolution. As the anonymous theater critic for the newspaper *Vendredi* noted, "Everything contributed to creating this atmosphere of collective warmth: the day, the subject, the mood. The Bastille *really* was taken on this evening in 1936. And when at the end actors and audience sang together the Marseillaise and the Internationale there was no longer anyone *watching* or *listening*, there were no longer actors playing roles."[6] In other words, this production broke all sorts of barriers, including that between the performers and the spectators.

Almost a year later, the Pavilion of Women, Children, and Families opened at the Exposition Universelle in Paris. Located in the Jardins des Champs-Elysées, it was grouped with the pavilions of Collaboration, Solidarity, Security, Youth Projects, and Hygiene. Although this section of six pavilions about "social questions" might appear to carry leftist overtones, the intention of the planners was not specifically leftist. Shanny Peer notes in her monograph on the Exposition Universelle that the section was included to assert that France was every bit as interested in these issues as fascist Germany and Italy, and the communist Soviet Union.[7] And Edmond Labbé, the chief commissioner of the exposition, stated in his final report: "Class 8a [Women, Children and Families] demonstrated that we should not be thought of as poor relations in comparison to other countries that are so proud of their solicitous mothers and their battalions of vigorous children, all dressed up and shiny clean as if they were preparing for a parade."[8]

Marguerite Long's piano students performed a recital to celebrate the 25 June 1937 opening of the Pavilion of Women, Children, and Families. Featured on that program was a set of eight pieces inspired by various impressions and sights at the fair, which would be published as *À l'exposition*. Some were caricatures, like Darius Milhaud's "La tour de l'exposition," and others focused on specific exhibits, such as Francis Poulenc's bourrée "Au pavillon d'Auvergne" or Germaine Tailleferre's "Au pavillon d'Alsace." Three of the pieces were inspired by the Seine, which flowed through the middle of the Exposition: Henri Sauguet's "Nuit coloniale sur les bords de la Seine," Marcel Delannoy's "Diner sur l'eau," and Auric's "La Seine, un matin. . . ."

The third collective work in which Auric participated was the film *La vie d'un homme*. Directed by Jean-Paul Le Chanois, it was released in

January 1938 in memory of the leftist hero Paul Vaillant-Couturier, who had died on 10 October 1937.[9] The thirty-minute film eulogizes Vaillant-Couturier through extensive use of newsreel footage, placing him at the center of four major leftist revolutions in the 1920s and 1930s. His writings—journalism, novels, and poetry—were highly influential and led to his entry into politics in the wake of World War I. As one of the founders of the French Communist Party, he was elected twice to represent Paris in the Chambre des Députés and later served two terms as the mayor of the Parisian suburb Villejuif. As the premiere leftist intellectual in France, he had also been instrumental in the establishment of AEAR. The film also notes his friendship with Lenin, his visits in the 1920s to communist revolutionaries in China, and his support of the Republicans before and during the Spanish Civil War.[10] The soundtrack of *La vie d'un homme* consists of narration and music. The voice-over narration was provided by communist intellectuals, including Louis Aragon, Guy de la Batut, Gabrielle Fontan, Jandeline (Aline Jeannerot), Gaston Modot, and Léon Moussinac. Auric, Arthur Honegger, and Henri Sauveplane served as the musical advisors. Eschewing newly composed music, they excerpted pieces regularly celebrated by the Fédération Musicale Populaire for promoting the universalizing and fraternal aspects of leftist politics, most notably "L'internationale" and Beethoven's Third Symphony ("Eroica").[11]

By participating in these projects, Auric took part in events that exalted collectivization. In each, he collaborated with like-minded individuals, including musicians, writers, filmmakers, and numerous others. Each project also involved a conscious effort to reach a wide audience and to expose them to the most important artistic figures involved in—or celebrated by—AEAR, the Maison de la Culture, and the Fédération. *Le Quatorze Juillet* did so by its very nature and by the involvement of seven leading composers; *A l'exposition* by the populist setting of its premiere and the contributions of eight composers, three of whom had written music for *Le Quatorze Juillet*; *La vie d'un homme* by its nationwide release in movie theaters; and by the musical collaboration of three composers who participated prominently in the Maison de la Culture and the Fédération.

Reaching Out to the *Plus Grand Public*

Auric's involvement in these leftist organizations led him to reconceive his relationship to the audience. As mentioned above, during the 1920s, Auric created music for a relatively small, artistic elite. During the Popular Front years, however, he aimed to connect with the broadest

audiences possible. He continued to compose songs, but set texts of a significantly different character; his instrumental music adopted a populist tone; and the films on which he collaborated in the late 1930s are far removed from his first three.[12] Between 1935 and 1938, Auric composed scores for fourteen feature-length films (see Table 1). With the possible exception of Jean Delannoy, all of the directors listed here had ties to the French left and were members of AEAR. All fourteen of the films have either explicit links in their plots to the French left or represent a new film aesthetic advocated by the collective Ciné-Liberté, an offshoot of AEAR.

This new aesthetic emerged in the wake of a 1936 visit to Moscow by several AEAR members. The delegation was dispatched with the express aim of learning more about the Soviet artistic policy of Socialist Realism. Upon their return, some members of the delegation—most notably, André Gide and Romain Rolland—reported to the readers of *Commune* that they did not believe Socialist Realism, as practiced in the Soviet Union, would be viable or accepted in France—either by the artists or by the audiences.[13] For many, this was the end of the discussion. But for film critic Georges Sadoul and others working in cinema, the Soviet aesthetic provided inspiration for a new, distinctively French aesthetic that they called Social Realism.[14]

According to Social Realism, the filmmakers made films that sought to depict the spaces in which working-class characters lived and

Table 1. Films scored by Auric, 1935–38, and their directors

Year	Title	Director
1935	*Les mystères de Paris*	Félix Gandéra
1936	*Sous les yeux d'Occident* [*Razoumov*]	Marc Allégret
1937	*L'affaire Lafarge*	Pierre Chenal
	L'alibi	Pierre Chenal
	La danseuse rouge	Jean-Paul Paulin
	Un déjeuner de soleil	Marcel Cravenne
	Gribouille	Marc Allégret
	Le messager	Raymond Rouleau
	La mort du sphinx	L. Carls
1938	*Entrée des artistes*	Marc Allégret
	Orage	Marc Allégret
	La rue sans joie	André Hugon
	Son oncle de Normandie	Jean Dréville
	Tamara la complaisante	Félix Gandéra and Jean Delannoy

worked. These directors strove to portray a broken socioeconomic environment that crushed the hopes and dreams of individuals, who are then left with no choice but to revolt against an unjust economic order. A frequent plot device involves the transgression of class boundaries, which invariably leads to disastrous consequences. Perhaps the clearest examples of this aesthetic in the films Auric scored are Marc Allégret's *Entrée des artistes* and André Hugon's *La rue sans joie*.

The first film unfolds in and around the acting classes taught by Professor Lambertin at the Paris Conservatoire. Because realism was of utmost importance within this cinematic aesthetic, Louis Jouvet, who was then teaching at the Conservatoire, played Lambertin. The scenes were shot in the school, and Jouvet's actual students filled all of the secondary and minor roles in his onscreen classroom. Virtually all of the film's student characters hail from middle- and upper-class families. The only exception is Coecilia (Odette Joyeux), who comes from the working class and works in a laundry to support her family and her education. In line with the social realist aesthetic, Coecilia and her co-workers are shown hard at work in a *blanchisserie* (see fig. 1).

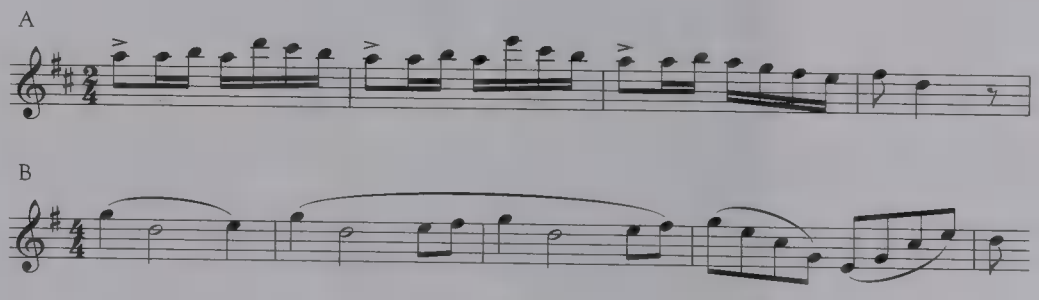
Coecilia's life begins to unravel when she falls in love with François (Claude Dauphin), a star student in the class who is the libertine son of a wealthy family. Her jealousy is fueled by his loose morals, a trait commonly used to characterize the affluent in social realist films. When he finally refuses to commit to a relationship with her, she opts for revenge. During their jury piece at the end of the school year, François's character poisons Coecilia's. Unbeknownst to François, however, Coecilia has

Figure 1. Professor Lambertin arrives to rescue Coecilia from her father's *blanchisserie*.

replaced their usual vial of fake poison with the real stuff. As rehearsed, he pours the vial into a glass of water and she drinks it. The death scene, understandably, is completely convincing. So convincing, in fact, that François is charged with premeditated murder. Though he is ultimately exonerated, the incident marks a key aspect of the film's social realist world. Social boundaries, especially those between the upper class and the working class, are impermeable. Coecilia's dreams are thwarted not by her lack of talent but by her inability to adapt to the morals and priorities of her fellow students, all of whom are from a more comfortable socioeconomic background than hers.

But what of the music accompanying the film? Though one might think first of highlighting the class conflict with the contrast of "high" art music styles and "low" popular styles, Auric chooses to avoid such an obvious device. Instead, he employs the same harmonic and melodic idiom he used in his scores written for the Ballets Russes in the 1920s. The main title cue sets out two themes that then recur only rarely in the sparsely scored remainder of the film (see ex. 1). The first theme is in a bright D major with a *vivace* tempo. Violins play the rapid melodic figures over a dance-like accompanimental pattern in the lower strings. The second theme, in stark contrast, is introduced by the trombones at a much slower tempo. The two themes highlight both the vibrant, youthful life of the Conservatoire and the dark tragedy of François and Coecilia's jury piece. The former, in particular, is very similar in spirit and style to themes from *Les fâcheux* and the *Ouverture*, highlighting the musical similarities between Auric's musical aesthetics during the years of Les Six and of the Popular Front.

The difference lies in the context, not the idiom. Auric's immersion in the film industry was not made for monetary reasons, though he undoubtedly benefited financially from his film scores. Film represented to him an opportunity to bring his music to new and considerably larger



Example 1. Principal themes from *Entrée des artistes*, as they appear in the published score (Salabert, 1938): (A) "Générique," mm. 1–4; (B) "No. 7," mm. 1–5. © Editions Choudens—Rights transferred to Premiere Music Group SARL. All rights reserved. Used by Permission.

audiences. Auric's music for the films was disseminated in a variety of media. A majority of the scores for the fourteen films in Table 1 were published in their entirety and sold as sheet music. For spectators of a given film who liked the music and sought to purchase the score, the publisher was consistently credited onscreen together with the composer's name (see fig. 2). Most of the scores were published in piano reductions, though there were also some songs, and the score for *La rue sans joie* was arranged for string trio by Francis Salabert.

In *La rue sans joie*, the social realist aspects of the interlocking stories trace similar narrative trajectories to that of *Entrée des artistes*. Young women try to raise their station in life, but their efforts are thwarted by the profit-oriented machinations of the upper classes. The film is a remake of Georg Pabst's 1925 *Die freudlose Gasse*, itself an adaptation of a novel by the Viennese author Hugo Bettauer.[15] Written in 1924, Bettauer's novel describes a society in which members of the working and middle classes are caught in the grip of an economic vise—between the amoral, corrupt rich and ever-increasing inflation and unemployment. The novel focuses on two young women who live in the same building on "Joyless Street," a fictional street in Vienna. Marie's family lives on the first floor and is poor; Grete's, living just above on the second floor, is middle class. Both women endure economic crises that push them to the brink of ruin. The only path to a tenuous security is money, and the only option left for them is to become prostitutes at Frau Greifer's brothel across the street. Meanwhile, Marie's fiancé,

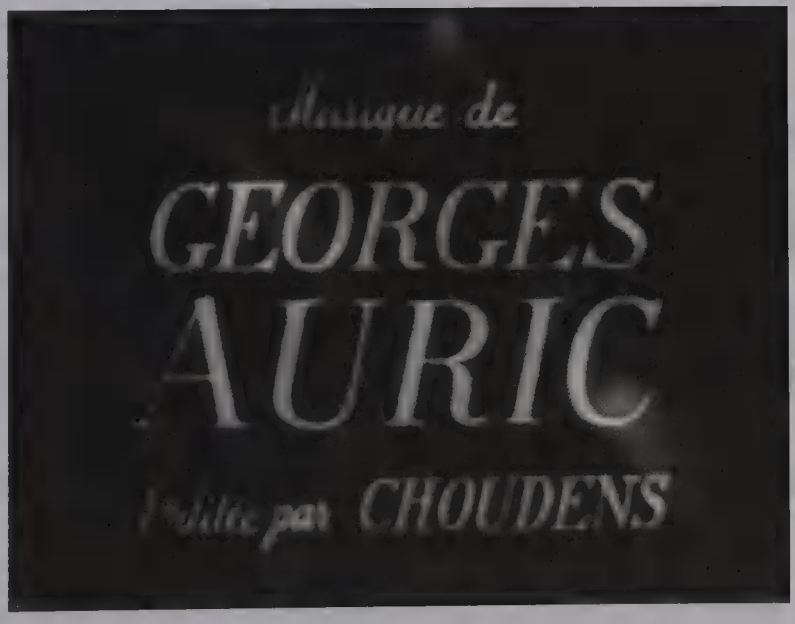


Figure 2. Music credits for *Entrée des artistes*.

Louis—a promising young banker who is trying desperately to "get rich quick"—is having an affair with his boss's daughter. When Marie discovers Louis and the "other woman" enjoying a tryst at the brothel, she murders her rival. Marie escapes undetected by witnesses and Grete is wrongfully accused of the murder. Grete's sensational trial is brought to a melodramatic end when Marie, dying from tuberculosis, arrives in the courtroom at the last possible second and confesses to the crime.

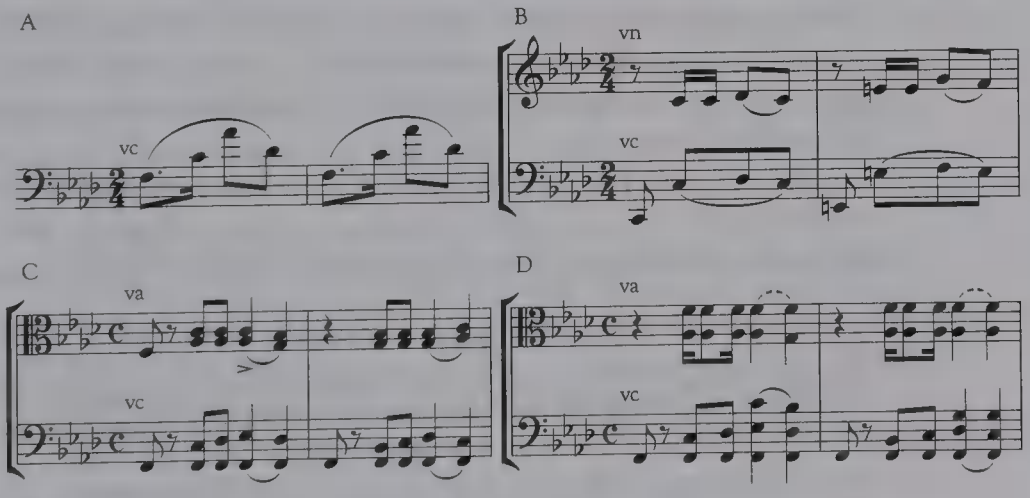
Though Hugon's film stays close to the novel's original plot, it trims the story considerably, almost completely excising the story of Marie and Louis. Most of the film is devoted to Grete, now given the Gallic name Jeanne (Dita Parlo). After investing all of the family's money in the stock market, Jeanne's father loses his entire fortune in La Crise, the 1929 crash that precipitated the Great Depression. Distraught, he commits suicide. Jeanne's grandfather (Jean Périer) is a disabled veteran of the Great War. Jeanne's mother (Charlotte Barbier-Krauss) has to stay at home to raise Jeanne's young brother (Claude Roy) and sister (Francine Dartois). Despite her youth—in the novel she is seventeen, in the film she is roughly the same age—Jeanne becomes the sole provider for her middle-class family. Jeanne is pushed to the brink early in the film, when her boss (Paul Pauley) is arrested for financial indiscretions, leading to the closure of the office. Jeanne and her co-workers lose their jobs.

After accepting loans from Frau Greifer, now renamed Madame Geffier (Marguerite Deval), Jeanne is obligated to repay her debt by becoming a denizen of Mme Geffier's brothel. At this point, the plots converge. Marie (Line Noro) has already been entrapped by Mme Geffier and encourages Jeanne to escape. Jeanne's family rents out a room to the journalist Dumas (Albert Préjean), which provides some income as well as a romantic interest for Jeanne. Dumas, meanwhile, is investigating the murder of a woman named Léa, for which Louis (Valéry Inkijinoff) is the prime suspect. During a police sting at Mme Geffier's brothel, Dumas saves Jeanne from compromising her bourgeois status. Mme Geffier is brought in for questioning in the murder investigation and mendaciously accuses Jeanne of the murder. Her accusation leads to the trial that occupies the final third of the film. Ultimately, Jeanne is found innocent—in terms of both the murder and her virginity.

This film is rife with characters trying to transcend their dire socio-economic situations. Jeanne's middle-class father and Louis both act like wealthy speculators but are failures. The affluent characters—Jeanne's boss, Louis's boss, and several other minor characters—are oblivious to the misery and poverty surrounding them. By day, Mme Geffier is a modest seamstress with her own shop; by night, she moves among *le tout Paris*. Marie, coming from a working-class family, turns to Louis and

Madame Geffier in order to improve her lot in life. Jeanne, whose family has been reduced to working-class status, redeems herself and her family by marrying the middle-class journalist Dumas.

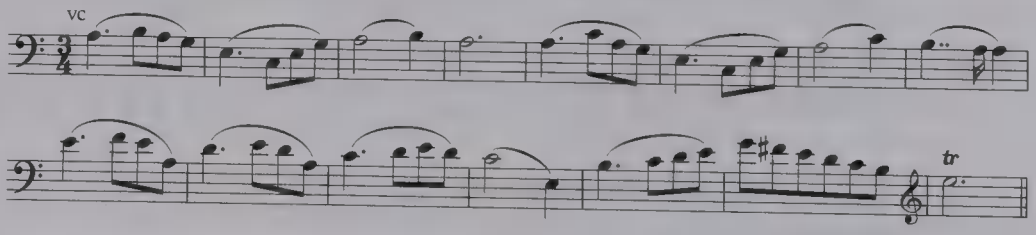
Auric's score is designed to appeal to the general public in several ways. He shared the compositional responsibilities with the prolific and highly successful songwriter Vincent Scotto. Auric contributed the six cues of underscoring, and Scotto wrote the songs and dance numbers. The most successful of these, "L'amour des hommes," became a signature song for the legendary *chanteuse* Fréhel, who performed it in her role as Mme Geffier's assistant, Henriette.

In addition, Auric sought to connect with "uncultivated" listeners by utilizing elements of popular music. Auric's approach is exemplified in cue "VIII. Police," which accompanies the climactic scene of the film. Here, Jeanne reaches her nadir. Denied credit by the grocer in her neighborhood, she is finally desperate enough to surrender herself to one of Mme Geffier's customers in exchange for food. The cue is a stylized tango featuring several variations of the habanera rhythm (see ex. 2), which at the time would have evoked tangos and Bizet's *Carmen*—the sexually charged images of both are far removed from Jeanne's modest bourgeois temperament. The cue begins by underscoring a scene of one of Mme Geffier's employees dancing nude to entertain customers. The second variation is heard as Jeanne is denied credit by the grocer. The first variation returns as Jeanne looks at the window of the brothel and decides to accept Mme Geffier's proposition, which she has refused repeatedly. The portentous fourth variation is heard as

Example 2. Variations on the habanera rhythm found in the published score for *La rue sans joie* (Salabert, 1938): (A) "VIII. Police," mm. 1–2; (B) "VIII. Police," mm. 22–23; (C) "I. Générique," mm. 8–9; (D) "I. Générique," mm. 14–15.

Dumas and the police inspector arrive at the brothel. Finally, when Jeanne accepts food from Mme Geffier, the original habanera accompanies a new melody. However, if the ironic sweetness of the new melody reflects Jeanne's relief and hope, the sordid associations of the habanera here remind the spectator just how much that first bite will cost her.

Clearly, this cue is not like the tangos that French audiences of the 1930s would have found at any of the Parisian dancing halls, cabarets, and on the radio. By drawing on such a popular style of music, then submitting it to processes of variation and transformation typical of the concert hall, Auric composed a work that could appeal to the masses and simultaneously interest them in the intellectual fascination proffered by art music.

Further, Auric's populist aesthetic is evident in the affective qualities of the score. At any given moment, his music urges the spectator to sympathize either with the characters' joy or with their pain. Auric's score makes the message easy to understand, even for "uncultivated" listeners, since one poignant theme dominates the entire score (see ex. 3). The lethargic tempo and half notes on every downbeat create a plodding, almost oppressive mood, which is reinforced by the three eighth notes that lead into almost every downbeat. The static oscillation between tonic and dominant in the first half of the theme is balanced in the second by a melody that slowly falls from dominant to tonic. But this melody is interrupted just before its cadence, giving it a curiously "incomplete" sound—the image of a Sisyphean task expressed through music. This theme, which is consistently associated with characters who compromise their morals, appears in all but one of Auric's cues—the final cue underscoring the happy ending. Exuberantly, Jeanne and Dumas emerge from Notre Dame as a married couple, while cue "IX. Carillon" evokes the celebratory tolling of the cathedral's bells. And so, Auric's score, like the film itself, moves from sadness and pain to joy and wedded bliss.

In line with the musico-political sentiments of Auric and the Fédération, this score—unlike Auric's score for Cocteau's film *Le sang d'un poète*—is designed to be accessible for listeners lacking a musical

Example 3. Principal theme from *La rue sans joie*: "IV. Assassinat," mm. 185–99.

education. As noted previously, Auric achieves this in *La rue sans joie* by drawing on elements of popular music and by using themes that reflect the Manichean dualities of the film's melodrama. But this score also serves a didactic purpose, virtually training the spectator in how to listen to art music. The simplicity of a score with only one recurring theme focuses the audience's attention on that theme. By the end of the film, even the most uncultivated spectator has learned to associate specific musical qualities with certain tragic elements. If musically adept moviegoers purchased the score and played it with friends or family, they would surely recognize the more artistic touches that Auric employed in this apparently simple score—such as the variations and transformations of the habanera rhythm or the interrupted cadences of the tragic theme. To judge the success of Auric's educational efforts in this score is impossible, as audience surveys had not yet come into being. However, recognizing Auric's connections to the Fédération and acknowledging that group's extensive efforts to provide music education for the masses makes the educational potential of this score not as fanciful as it might at first appear.

Auric's desire to speak to a broader audience was not confined only to collective works and film scores. In 1937 and 1938, he composed three works for the concert hall that embrace a populist modernist aesthetic: the Violin Sonata, the Woodwind Trio, and the *Ouverture pour orchestre*. The *Ouverture* is a bright and lively work commissioned as a prelude to the premiere in France of Shostakovich's "socialist realist" Fifth Symphony, an event organized by the Fédération. Claude Chamfray, writing in *La revue musicale*, described the *Ouverture* as "music for the people in the sense that it is easily accessible and of the best [quality]."[16] In the next issue of the same journal, Léon Kochnitzky compared it with Auric's earlier ballets for Diaghilev—a comparison that holds up well and highlights the numerous stylistic similarities between Auric's music of the 1920s and the 1930s.

> We find here the liveliness, the verve, and the charming fantasy of *Concurrence* and *Les Matelots*. But with a little more and a little less. Auric, after several years of silence, has shed himself of the young man that he was. The orchestral pranks, the literary jokes, and the schoolboy and salon facetiousness are over and done with. His musical thought remains abundant, gushing even. But, more by slow work over the years than by conscious effort, it has become clearer and purified. In this *Ouverture*, there is a direct and authentic element that touches us deeply.[17]

Both critics agree that the *Ouverture* speaks directly to listeners. They imply that this work does not need to rely on self-evident finesse or inside jokes to reach an *au courant* audience. Furthermore, it eschews the traditional forms and emotional signifiers of German Romantic music. Instead, Auric aims to please a broad audience through attractive and memorable melodies, the various restatements of which define the form of the piece. Both critics recognize the *Ouverture*'s place in the grand tradition of French music. According to Chamfray, the work follows in the tradition of Chabrier—a composer who, in the wake of the Franco-Prussian War, composed music that was inspired by café-concerts and popular styles, and inspired Debussy, Ravel, and Les Six.[18] For Kochnitzky, Auric's *Ouverture* recalls a wide variety of musics that preceded the dominance of German Romanticism's intellectual, philosophical, and literary ideals. Instead, Kochnitzky compares the *Ouverture* to keyboard works by the seventeenth-century composer Girolamo Frescobaldi, the "imported" styles of Bach's French and English keyboard suites, the wit of Haydn's late-eighteenth-century rondos, and "the spirited overture composed by Rossini as he prepared to move to Paris." Kochnitzky suggests that these pre-Romantic works share an important feature with Auric's *Ouverture*: "This music aspires only to please us. Now, I dare say that it pleases us for ontological reasons, because that is its manner of being. And that is what matters. There are fair prospects that such a charming, delicate, and witty work will also be a durable work." In comparison to the intellectual heft and emotional sublimity of Wagner's music dramas—the epitome of German Romanticism in the eyes of most French critics—pleasure and beauty are aesthetic traits that speak to all listeners.

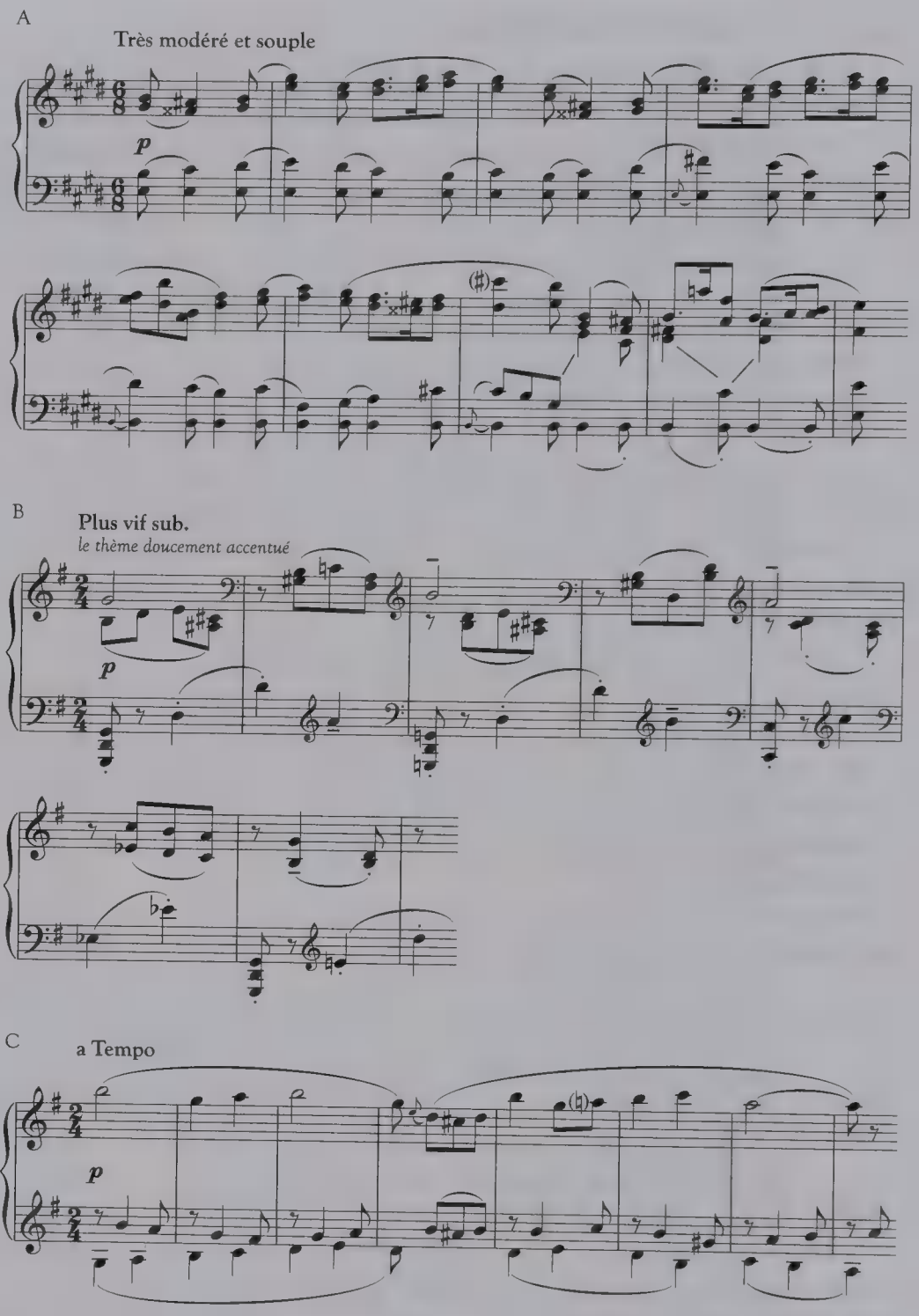
Auric's *Ouverture*—which avoids the sonata form that is usually implied by such a title—does not focus on development for its own sake, but rather seeks to entertain. Because the compositional effort focused on melody—the apparent surface of music—rather than on harmonic ingenuity or motivic development, Auric's music was perceived by Chamfray and Kochnitzky as being accessible to a broad French public. After all, according to the tenets of the Paris Conservatoire and the Schola Cantorum, appreciation of high-art music lay in a detailed and subtle understanding of harmony and counterpoint. Populist music that offered audiences vivacious, memorable tunes—like Auric's films scores and other concert hall works from these years—was deemed attractive to those proletarian listeners without formal musical education; in other words, it was music not just for "connoisseurs and amateurs" but for the "people."

Music for Youth

Auric and other members of the Fédération Musicale Populaire—in line with policies of the Popular Front government—were committed to reaching the youth of France. The Fédération founded local conservatories, community choruses, and bands throughout the nation, while leading members composed music designed for the education of young musicians. Between 1937 and 1939, Auric composed seven works specifically for pedagogical purposes: "La Seine, un matin . . . " from *À l'exposition*, an Impromptu in G (1937), the Violin Sonata (1937), the songs "Le canard" and "Chantons jeunes filles" (1937), and Impromptus in E and E-flat (1939).[19]

As with the other works in *À l'exposition*, "La Seine, un matin . . ." was written for piano students of modest technical abilities and highlights specific pedagogical challenges, thus creating opportunities for the young pianists to develop particular aspects of their technique. It is composed in three sections, each distinguished by a tempo fluctuation, as well as by changes in the texture and density of the voicing. During the first section, pedal points accentuate the dexterity required of the right hand (see ex. 4A). The faster middle section features a less complex texture that balances the challenges presented by the hand crossings and leaps in the left hand (see ex. 4B). Finally, Auric presents the young pianist with a lyrical section that requires a smooth and even legato, particularly in the alternating voices of the left hand (see ex. 4C).

Auric's greatest success in composing for a young audience came with two camp songs, "Le campeur en chocolat" and "La corvée d'eau," written for children who attended the thousands of summer camps established by the Popular Front and related leftist organizations. The first of these songs tells of a city boy who is camping in the woods for the first time; this reflects the demographics of the camps, which primarily served poor children from the larger cities. Both songs were published in 1937 by the Fédération in a series that aimed to introduce children to music written by the leading composers of the day (see Table 2). The success and popularity of Auric's songs can be measured by their longevity. "Le campeur en chocolat" was one of the songs sung by women of the Resistance who were imprisoned in Paris during World War II.[20] In the early 1960s, both songs were still in the standard repertoire of songs for French camp counselors; there is anecdotal evidence that these songs persist in the informal repertory of French children today, and certainly in the memories of their parents and grandparents.[21] Following the student demonstrations in May 1968, the French-Algerian pop



Example 4. Auric, "La Seine, un matin . . ." from *À l'exposition* (R. Deiss, 1937): (A) mm. 1–8; (B) mm. 17–24; (C) mm. 49–56.

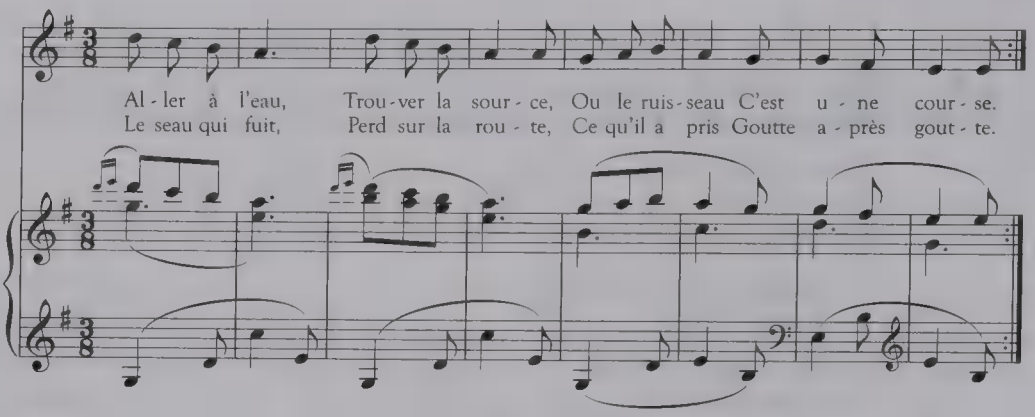
singer Mouloudji included "La corvée d'eau" on his album *Le chant des ouvriers* (Workers' Songs).[22] In 1983, shortly before Auric's death, this song was reprinted in a choral arrangement.[23] In the early 1990s,

Table 2. *Les chants du campeur*, published by Fédération Musicale Populaire, 1937–38

"Le conscrit du Languedoc"	
"Hardi camarades"	
"L'internationale"	
"Les partisans"	
"La Varsovienne"	
"Le campeur en chocolat"	Georges Auric
"La corvée d'eau"	Georges Auric
"Le chant de l'auberge"	Henri Cliquet-Pleyel
"Pour faire un feu"	Yvonne Desportes
"Réveil"	Yvonne Desportes
"La soupe à l'oignon"	Yvonne Desportes
"Le front des travailleurs"	Hans Eisler
"Jeunesse"	Arthur Honegger
"Le jeu du camp fou"	André Jolivet
"Le sac mal fait"	Henry Sauveplane
"Au devant de la vie"	Dmitri Shostakovich

French students at Fontainebleau continued to sing it with guitar accompaniment.[24]

"La corvée d'eau" inhabits a very different sound than that of the scores *Entrée des artistes* or *La rue sans joie*. Whereas Auric's film music is an effort to distribute art music to a wide audience, with this song there is an overt didactic purpose. The lyrics, which describe the chore of finding water for the camp, teach that the contribution of each child is necessary for the happiness of all. You cannot run while carrying a bucket of water, since you'll spill it; watch your step, so you don't trip and drop the bucket; keep your mind on the job at hand, so you get it done while there is still light. In the original piano/vocal arrangement, the left hand evokes the strumming of a guitar while the right doubles the vocal line. The music is catchy, repetitive, and easily memorized and serves to reinforce the lesson for the children singing it around a campfire (see ex. 5).

Such camp songs are, in their unpretentious way, both idealistic and utopian. Paul Vaillant-Couturier, at the time a renowned writer and one of the leaders of the French Communist Party, wrote the texts. When the song was composed, Auric's name still carried a certain weight and importance, even if his concert-hall career was beginning to be eclipsed by his friends Arthur Honegger, Francis Poulenc, and Darius Milhaud. Translated into an American perspective, it would be as if children—at least from the 1930s through the 1990s—had grown up

Al - ler à l'eau, Trou - ver la sour - ce, Ou le ruis - seau C'est u - ne cour - se.
Le seau qui fuit, Perd sur la rou - te, Ce qu'il a pris Goutte a - près gout - te.

Example 5. First verse of "La corvée d'eau" (Fédération Musicale Populaire, 1937).

singing campfire songs penned by William Carlos Williams and Aaron Copland.

For Auric, composing for a young audience served several goals. Through his involvement with the Fédération and the Maison de la Culture, Auric developed an interest in music education. This is evinced not only by his pedagogical works but also by his participation in recorded music appreciation lessons that were distributed by the Maison de la Culture[25] and by an article published in *Cahiers de la jeunesse*.[26]

Overt Political Statements

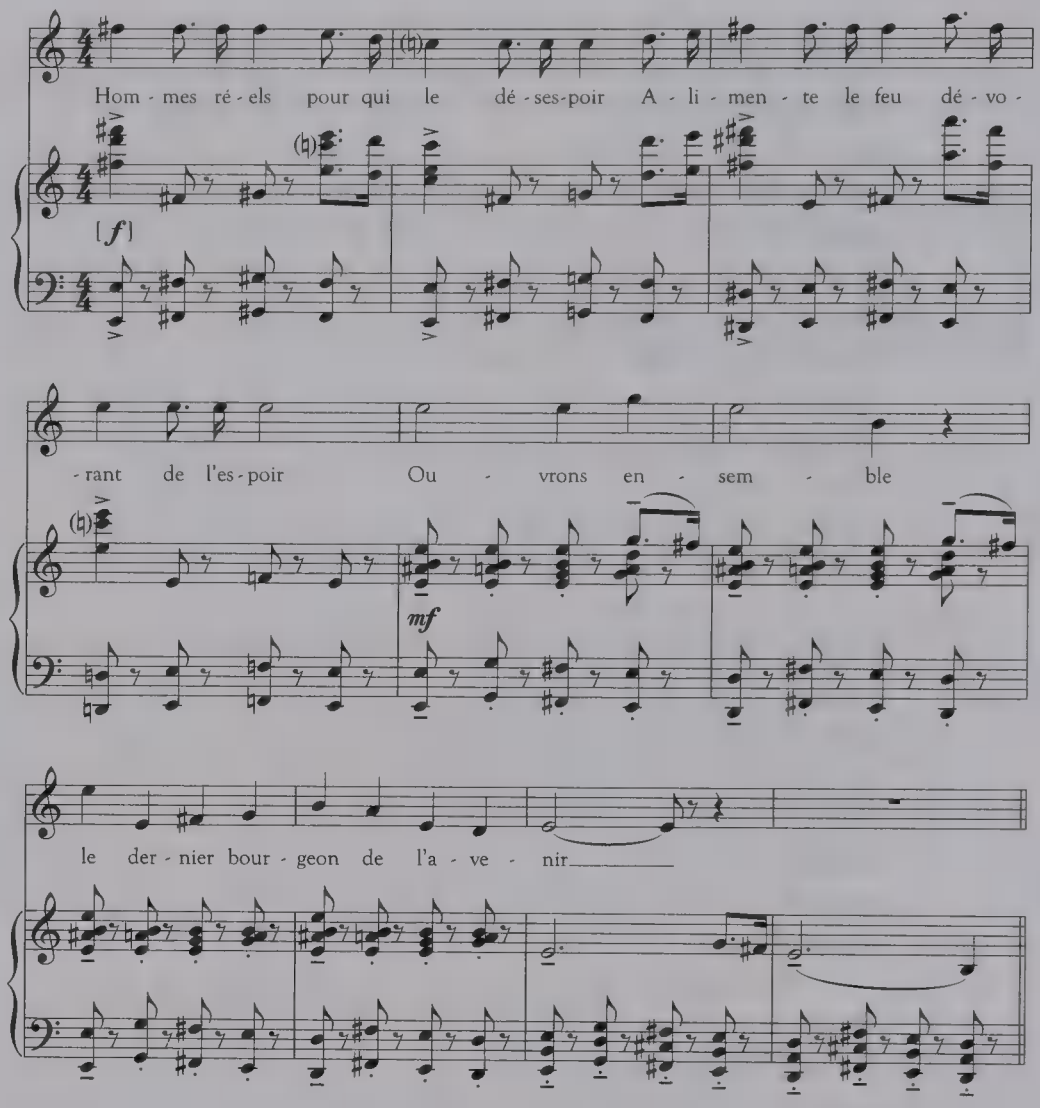
During the mid- and late 1930s, Auric was quite vocal about his beliefs, even in the midst of aristocratic salons and nightclubs frequented by *le tout Paris*. In Jean Hugo's diary, Marie-Laure de Noailles is quoted as saying that Auric was "far to the left and raise[d] his little clenched fist."[27] Likewise, Eugen Weber writes that Auric could be found in the cabaret Le Boeuf sur le Toit "raising his . . . closed fist in honor of the Popular Front."[28] Inevitably, his political passions found his way into some of his compositions.

The strongest expression of the composer's musico-political convictions was in response to the bombing of Guernica during the Spanish Civil War. Late in the afternoon of 26 April 1937, at the behest of Franco, the German and Italian air forces attacked the small town, virtually obliterating it and causing heavy casualties. Leftists throughout the world—especially in France—were outraged, since the German and Italian fascist governments had flaunted a nonintervention treaty. In Europe and the United States, leftists—and especially the communists—lobbied for their respective governments to retaliate. In France,

the reaction of the far left was particularly virulent and they kept the story as front-page news for over a month, until it was displaced by the opening of the Exposition Universelle—the event for which Auric composed his piano piece "La Seine, un matin . . .." Several intellectuals and artists affiliated with the French Communist Party responded through their work. The most famous example is undoubtedly Picasso's painting *Guernica*, which was displayed in the Spanish Pavilion during the World's Fair. Tacked onto the wall facing Picasso's haunting work was a bitter poem by the communist poet Paul Eluard, titled "La victoire de Guérnica."[29] In June 1937, the month after Picasso and Eluard had created their works, Auric set Eluard's poem to music. A fragment of Auric's song and the complete poem by Eluard were published in *Cahiers d'art*, accompanying a series of engravings by Picasso titled *Songe et mensonge de Franco* (The Dream and Lie of Franco).[30]

In his *vers libre* poem, Eluard's expression of rage obliterates all traditional notions of poetic form, meter, and rhyme. In the fragment of Auric's music that survives in *Cahiers d'art*, he utilizes what was for him an extraordinarily unusual harmonic language as unrelenting dissonances alternate with whole tone and octatonic gestures (see ex. 6). The effect is direct, passionate, and easily understood by any listener. In addition, the song's unvarying homophony evokes the characteristic texture of mass songs, further linking it with the music approved by the international communist movement.

Throughout the remaining four-and-a-half decades of his career, Auric would return time and again to the strategies outlined in this article. The interest in collectivization would lead to numerous efforts to protect the livelihoods of his fellow musicians. He would serve four terms as a union president: in 1944 and 1945 for the Syndicat des Auteurs et Compositeurs Dramatiques, and then in 1950, 1974, and 1975 for the Syndicat Nationale des Auteurs et Compositeurs. He would also become a major figure in artists' rights societies and the continually evolving debates about copyright. At the Société des Auteurs, Compositeurs, et Editeurs de la Musique (SACEM), he was elected to the Conseil d'Administration in 1945. He moved from that council to the presidency of the society, a position he held almost every year from 1954 to 1978. He was also the honorary president from 1951 to 1953 and again from 1979 to 1983. For the International Confederation of Societies of Authors and Composers (CISAC), he served as the president from 1968 to 1970 and hosted the 1971 Paris Conference, where delegates drafted what are still the most recent revisions to the Berne Convention, the treaty that guarantees the international recognition of copyrights.


Hom - mes ré - els pour qui le dé - ses-poir A - li - men - te le feu dé - vo -
[f]
- rant de l'es - poir Ou - vrons en - sem - ble
mf
le der - nier bour - geon de l'a - ve - nir

Example 6. Auric, *La victoire de Guérnica*, fragment, mm. 11–20. Used by permission of Michèle Auric and the Société Pro Arte Georges Auric.

Auric's efforts to reach out to broad audiences expanded in a variety of ways over the remainder of his career. Over the next thirty-five years, he composed scores for more than a hundred feature films, eight television series, documentaries, and films, and more than a dozen short films. Through his collaborations with high-profile filmmakers, Auric's music helped define the sound worlds of the post-World War II *tradition du qualité* in France, the Ealing comedies and Hamer horror pictures in the United Kingdom, and the internationalist films in 1950s Hollywood. His most popular piece of film music was the "Song from *Moulin Rouge* (Where Is Your Heart?)." In the United Kingdom, the song spent thirty-one weeks on the *Cashbox* "Top Singles," including nine weeks at number 1. In the United States, the recording by

Mantovani and his orchestra spent five weeks on the *Billboard* "Top 30," while the version by Percy Faith spent twenty-four weeks on the chart, with eight weeks at number 1; at the end of the year, *Billboard* ranked Percy Faith's version as the top song of the year according to both sales figures and "disc jockey plays" on radio stations.

In addition to his extraordinary film music career, Auric explored a wide variety of musical genres and styles. Alongside esoteric, modernist works like *Phèdre* and *Imaginées* are scores in more popular styles. His score for the Anatole Litvak film *Goodbye Again*, released in France as *Aimez-vous Brahms*, is essentially a set of jazzy variations on Brahms's Third Symphony, with cues titled "No Love—Charleston," "Aimez-vouz Cha Cha," "Slow Cool," "Valse Paree," and "Say No More, It's Goodbye" (a torch song sung by Diahann Carroll). Auric's interest in jazz also led in 1954 to the establishment of the Académie du Jazz to promote jazz in France and recognize the leading figures in the genre.[31] In 1976, Auric collaborated with Gilbert Sigrist and Louis Amade to create *La plus belle histoire* (The Most Beautiful Story), a musical rooted in the French *chanson* tradition. The subject of that musical's book, along with its popular music identity, makes this work appear today to follow in the lines of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice's rock opera *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1971) and Stephen Schwartz and John-Michael Tebelak's rock musical *Godspell* (1971). Auric's interest in the French *chanson* is also reflected by his tenure in the early 1970s as the president of the Académie de la Chanson Française, an organization to promote the genre internationally. Finally, in 1967, Auric composed the music for a sound-and-light show at the Château de Chenonceaux in the Loire Valley.[32] Since the 1950s, these spectacles have been a significant part of the cultural offerings in one of France's most frequently visited regions.

Although he rarely wrote music that catered to youth audiences after the Popular Front years, he still invested himself in youth. He was a longtime juror for the Concours International Marguerite Long, one of the premiere French competitions for young pianists. He also championed young composers who he believed had something new and interesting to say. Pierre Boulez and Jean Barraqué were among those young composers he supported professionally, financially, and personally.[33]

After World War II, Auric composed very little music with explicit political messages. However, his wartime experiences were largely defined by his communist sympathies. Because the French Communist Party organized most of the early Resistance networks, his involvement in the Fédération Musicale Populaire led quite naturally to his participation in the Resistance. In summer 1941, Elsa Barraine, Roger Désormière, and Louis Durey founded the Front National des Musiciens.

Auric was quick to join his former colleagues and friends.[34] By the end of the war, Auric was editing the group's clandestine journal, *Musiciens d'aujourd'hui*.[35] He composed scores for films with both implicit and explicit political messages, most notably Jean Delannoy's *Le bossu* (1944).[36] In this film, which was completed on the day of the Normandy landings, Paul Féval's 1857 swashbuckler became a highly transparent allegory for the impending liberation of France. As Delannoy noted in his diary, he made the film "to infuse the public with courage and with the spirit of Resistance, . . . to shake up the spectators' torpor and to push them into action."[37] In addition to his films, Auric composed vocal music that spoke directly to the dark years that France was experiencing. In his *Quatre chants de la France malheureuse*, Auric set to music four poems written by poets associated with the French Resistance. Three of the poems were published clandestinely during the war by the Front National des Ecrivains; the fourth was written by Jules Supervielle, who was exiled in Uruguay for the duration of the war, and was published in Switzerland. Poetically, the *Quatre chants* evoke the French *terroir* through various images of nature, while also explicitly acknowledging the ongoing crisis. Musically, the songs are a fervent effort to inspire a spirit of resistance in all listeners.[38]

For Auric, the "necessary work" of populism in the 1930s marked the beginning of his mature work as a musician, not just a composer. Until his death in 1983, he strove to do everything he could to allow as many people as possible to share in the exultant joy of music. Reaching out to his fellow musicians and audiences by a variety of means, venues, and genres, he sought to eliminate the elitist notion of "our" music and, simply, to make music a source of beauty and hope to a *plus grand public*.

Notes

Colin Roust is an assistant professor of Music History at Roosevelt University's Chicago College of the Performing Arts. His doctorate is from the University of Michigan, where he wrote a dissertation on the film music and criticism of Georges Auric. He previously taught at the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music.
E-mail: croust@roosevelt.edu.

1. "Mais n'y a-t-il pas un public encore plus vaste qui, lui aussi, a le droit de partager d'aussi exaltantes joies—et sommes-nous certains que tout est fait pour le lui permettre? Je sais trop bien, hélas! ce qui peut entrer de chimérique dans tels de nos désirs et comment la dure réalité nous condamne, trop souvent, à abandonner ce que nous souhaitons le plus ardemment réaliser. . . . Il n'est pas que la bicyclette, le rugby ou les matches de boxe pour faire battre le cœur populaire. Encore faut-il lui permettre de savoir qu'un art accueillant et généreux est là, qui ne demande qu'à prodiguer à qui sait

et veut écouter ses consolantes splendeurs. . . . Je n'avais à dire, pour l'instant, que ceci: il n'est plus question de réserver à quelques-uns la jouissance de 'notre' musique. Demain plus que jamais elle doit être, elle sera la grande source de jeunesse et de force, la dispensatrice harmonieuse de beauté et d'espoir. Que chacun, simplement, accepte de participer à une oeuvre nécessaire." Georges Auric, "La musique pour le plus grand public," *La page musicale*, 5 November 1937, reproduced in Carl B. Schmidt, ed., *Ecrits sur la musique de Georges Auric/Writings on Music by Georges Auric*, vol. 4 (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2009), 1242.

2. All of these newspaper and journal articles are reprinted in Schmidt, *Les ecrits de Georges Auric*.

3. *À l'exposition: Illustrations musicales de Georges Auric, Marcel Delannoy, Jacques Ibert, Darius Milhaud, Francis Poulenc, Henri Sauguet, Florent Schmitt, et Germaine Tailleferre* (Paris: R. Deiss, 1937).

4. The others were Arthur Honegger, Jacques Ibert, Charles Koechlin, Daniel Lazarus, Darius Milhaud, and Albert Roussel.

5. Julian Jackson, *The Popular Front in France: Defending Democracy, 1934–1938* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 126–27.

6. From "Quatorze Juillet," *Vendredi*, 24 July 1936, quoted in Jackson, *The Popular Front in France*, 126.

7. Shanny Peer, *France on Display: Peasants, Provincials, and Folklore in the 1937 Paris World's Fair* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1998), 31–33.

8. Edmond Labbé, *Exposition international des arts et des techniques dans la vie modern, Paris, 1937. Rapport général*, 11 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1938–40), 5:112; trans. in Peer, *France on Display*, 195n50.

9. To the best of my knowledge, the film has never been re-released and the only copy available is preserved in Bois d'Arcy, France, at the Centre Nationale de Cinématographie Archives Françaises de Film. I am grateful to Gilles Langlais and Eric Le Roy for allowing me to consult that copy of the film.

10. Though Vaillant-Couturier often wrote scathing editorials about the post-1933 political situation in Germany, he was never directly involved in the communist activities there.

11. For more on how leftists co-opted Beethoven's music throughout the twentieth century, see works such as Esteban Buch, *Beethoven's Ninth: A Political History* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003); David B. Dennis, *Beethoven in German Politics, 1870–1989* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996); Sanna Pederson, "Beethoven and Freedom: Historicizing the Political Connection," *Beethoven Forum* 12, no. 1 (2005): 1–12.

12. Auric's first three film scores were composed for *Le sang d'un poète* (dir. Jean Cocteau; 1930), *À nous, la liberté!* (dir. René Clair; 1931), and *Lac aux dames* (dir. Marc Allégret; 1934).

13. See, for example, Gide's 1934 speech "Literature and Revolution," in Gide, *Littérature engagée* (Paris: Gallimard, 1950).

14. Georges Sadoul, "A propos de quelques films recents," *Commune* 39 (1936): 372–79.

15. Hugo Bettauer, *Die freudlose Gasse: Ein Wiener Roman aus unseren Tagen* (Vienna: Gloriette Verlag, 1924).

16. "C'est de la musique populaire en ce sens qu'elle est facilement accessible, et de la meilleure." Claude Chamfray, "Le chant du monde," *La revue musicale* 185 (July–August 1938): 53.

17. "Nous y retrouvons le brio, la verve, la fantaisie charmante de *Concurrence* et des *Matelots*. Avec quelque chose en moins et quelque chose en plus. Auric, après plusieurs années de silence, a dépouillé le jeune homme qu'il était. Finies les incartades orchestrales, les plaisanteries littéraires, les facéties d'école et de salon. La pensée musicale demeure abondante, jaillissante. Mais elle s'est, plus par le lent travail des années que par un effort volontaire, éclaircie, purifiée. Il y a dans cette *Ouverture* un élément direct, authentique qui nous touche profondément." Léon Kochnitzky, "*Ouverture* de Georges Auric," *La revue musicale* 186 (September–November 1938): 137–38. Auric's ballet *La concurrence* was given its premiere on 12 April 1932 by the Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo; *Les matelots*, on 15 June 1925 by the Ballets Russes.

18. For more on Chabrier's nationalism and populism, see Joseph Desaymard, *Emmanuel Chabrier: Un artiste auvergnat* (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1908); Steven Huebner, *French Opera at the "Fin de Siècle": Wagnerism, Nationalism, and Style* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Frédéric Robert, *Emmanuel Chabrier, l'homme et son oeuvre* (Paris: Seghers, 1970).

19. The Fédération Musicale Populaire was, of course, not the only group of musicians to explore these ideas during the 1930s. At roughly the same time, Hindemith was composing his "music to sing and play," works intended for teaching and for the enjoyment of amateurs. Despite Hindemith's more extensive use of dissonance, there are striking musical similarities between his "music to sing and play" and the works mentioned in this section. In addition, the Promenade Concerts in London were founded in 1895 with the explicit goal of systematically educating the public about art music.

20. The song appears with twenty others in a songbook, dated February to August 1944 and maintained in La Petite Roquette prison by Christiane Poinsch Famery. Coll. Musée de la Résistance Nationale, Fonds thématiques, carton 15.

21. Jean-Claude Autran, "Chansons de colonies de vacances," *Histoire de la Seyne-sur-mer (Var): Récits, portraits, souvenirs*, http://seynoise.free.fr/chansons/chansons_de_colonies.html (accessed 28 January 2012). The web site assembles the personal archives and publications (all out of print) of Marius Autran, a regional historian in the département of Var.

22. Mouloudji, *Le chant des ouvriers: Ballades et complaintes syndicalistes*, 1968, Discodis LD 5809/5810, $33\frac{1}{3}$ rpm, 2 LPs.

23. Auric, "La Corvée d'eau" (Givors, Fr.: Art Musical Populaire, 1983).

24. I am grateful to Byron Adams, who learned the song from a fellow student during his studies at the American Conservatory and shared it with me.

25. Auric's recording of a music appreciation lesson is mentioned in Virginia, "L'activité de la Maison de la Culture de Paris," *Commune* 43 (March 1937).

26. The five-hundred-word article was published as a survey response in "Le cinéma et la jeunesse," *Les cahiers de la jeunesse* 3 (15 October 1937): 14–18.

27. Jean Hugo, *Le régard de la mémoire* (Le Paradou, Fr.: Actes Sud, 1983), 402.

28. Eugen Weber, *The Hollow Years: France in the 1930s* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1994), 57.

29. The poem was published in Eluard's *Cours naturel* (Paris: Editions du Sagittaire, 1938) and has gained currency in recent years after French students were asked to analyze it in the 2009 *baccalauréat* exam.

30. *Cahiers d'art* 12, nos. 1–3 (1937).

31. The Académie du Jazz was founded by Auric, Jean Cocteau, André Hodeir, and André Francis. Auric served the organization in the offices of vice president and président d'honneur.

32. *Un soir à Chenonceaux* was a 1967 production by Auric, J. Vallas, and the inventor of the *son et lumière* genre, Paul Robert-Houdin. It is included in the works list prepared by Josiane Mas in a volume of conference proceedings she edited, *Centenaire Georges Auric—Francis Poulenc: Colloque de l'Université de Montpellier III, Montpellier, 6 et 7 Mai 1999* (Montpellier, France: Presses Universitaires de Montpellier, 2001).

33. Whereas Auric's support of Boulez was often given in public ways—commissions, conducting opportunities, etc.—his support of Barraqué was generally on a very personal level. I am grateful to Françoise Thinat, who spoke with me on 26 February 2011 about Auric's role in Barraqué's life.

34. For a more complete history of the network of composers involved in the French Resistance, see Guy Krivopissko and Daniel Virieux, "Musiciens: Une profession en résistance?" in *La vie musicale sous Vichy*, ed. Myriam Chimènes (Paris: Editions Complexe, 2001), 333–51; and Virieux, "Front National des Musiciens (printemps 1941–automne 1944)," in *Roger Désormière, 1898–1963: Actes du colloque*, ed. Nicholas Guillot (Paris: Comité pour la celebration du centenaire de la naissance de Roger Désormière, 1999), 47–62.

35. Olivier Barrot, *L'ecran Français, 1943–1953: Histoire d'un journal & d'une époque* (Paris: Les Editeurs Français Réunis, 1979), 13; and Virieux, "Front National des Musiciens," 60.

36. For more on Auric's wartime films, see my dissertation, "Sounding French: The Film Music and Criticism of Georges Auric, 1919–1945" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 2007), 199–232.

37. "Insuffler au public le courage et l'esprit de Résistance dont nous avons le plus grand besoin à l'approche de la Libération qui semble proche. . . . Je veux aujourd'hui secouer la torpeur des spectateurs et les pousser à l'action." Jean Delannoy, *Enfance, mon beau souci* (Paris: NM7, 2002), 70–71.

38. For an analysis of the music and texts of these songs, see my article, "Toward an Aesthetic of Resistance: Georges Auric's *Quatre chants de la France malheureuse*," *Ars Lyrica* 18 (2009): 159–72.

Narrative, Interpretation, and the Popular Song

Keith Negus

The value of narratives in human understanding of the world is widely recognized. The importance of narrative is apparent in varieties of everyday storytelling as well is in written fiction, drama, spectacle and ritual, visual art and film, architecture, legal proceedings, scientific reports, and political theory, to provide only a partial list indicative of the range. Yet the popular song—one of the most pervasive narrative forms that people encounter in their daily lives—has been almost entirely ignored in the vast literature on narrative.[1] Whereas narratological methods have often featured in the interpretation of Western art music[2] and film music,[3] and literary approaches to lyrics have sometimes emphasized a poetics of storytelling,[4] theories of narrative have rarely been foregrounded in the study of popular songs.[5]

In this article, I will focus on narrative to explore practices of interpretation in both scholarship and everyday discussion about popular songs. I will emphasize the intersubjective interpretation of song meanings and advocate an "intercontextual" approach to the understanding of song narratives, drawing from research that emphasizes how our knowledge of the world is cumulative and always in a process of becoming through time. Overall, I argue for a musicological hermeneutics of the intersubjective production of value, belief, and judgment. In developing this theme, the structure of this essay journeys from textuality through intertextuality toward intercontextuality. I shall illustrate how popular songs participate in the wider cultural dialogues through which historical understanding is narrated, and explore how songs connect with more personal expressions of self and individual identity.

I

I begin with a sympathetic critique of David Nicholls's sustained attempt to begin addressing theses issues in an essay that signals its intent in the title—"Narrative Theory as an Analytical Tool in the Study of Popular Music Texts."[6] I will diverge from Nicholls's analytical

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method by suggesting that the application of narrative theory to popular music must inevitably and fruitfully move beyond the world of the text and allied media to a much wider universe. I shall briefly summarize his approach as I move toward a critique and outward from the text.

Nicholls starts with what he calls a "control level," level 1, where "there is no story per se in the lyrics, and as a consequence there is no element of narrative discourse in the musical setting."[7] At level 2 are songs with lyrics that include elements of narrative discourse that are not supported or reflected in a "neutral" musical setting. In contrast, level 3 refers to songs structured by a musical setting supporting the lyrical narratives. At level 4, lyrics and music are operating relatively independently and in a dynamic interactive manner to produce narrative meaning. Level 5 is characterized by a complex narrative conveyed through music, lyrics, visual imagery, along with accompanying prose and packaging.

Nicholls illustrates his typology by citing a range of songs, although in varying levels of detail. He fleetingly mentions the Beatles' "I Want to Hold Your Hand" and "Relax" by Frankie Goes to Hollywood as examples of level 1 non-narrative songs, and passes rapidly through level 2, offering only the Human League's "Don't You Want Me," which, despite clear narrative tensions and shifts between the lyrical viewpoints of the two protagonists of the duet, contains a "musical setting—in its unvarying melody and accompaniment textures—[that] resolutely resists any attempt at reflecting that narrative shift."[8] At level 3, he analyzes Kate Bush's "Wuthering Heights" to identify how formal properties such as "an unexpected harmonic shift" and "harmonically unstable verses" support the narrative and "reflect the restless wandering of Cathy's spirit"[9]—a clear assumption about the relationship between formal musical characteristics and extramusical meaning, plausibly integrating lyrical interpretation with a narratological approach drawn from the study of Western art music, and also demonstrating how songs can change tense.

At level 4, the analysis is more extensive and Nicholls explores how "instrumentation and timbre rather than melody and harmony"[10] are crucial to the narrative dynamics and semantics of the Buggles' "Video Killed the Radio Star." Eventually, Nicholls arrives at his fifth and highest level where "a complex narrative discourse is rendered through multiple media, including lyrics, music, prose, and art work."[11] At level 5, he provides detailed analysis of *The Lamb Lies Down on Broadway* by Genesis and The Who's *Quadrophenia*—albums from a period (1973–74) when musicians were aspiring to be taken seriously by producing conceptual musical statements and when critics used the

phrase "progressive rock" to distance such works from the stand-alone pop single (the idea of progress through increasing musical complexity is implicit in this typology).[12]

I do not dispute the intricacy of the tales that are told on these albums and their supporting prose and imagery (and in similar concept albums created during this period). Nicholls's analysis of the construction of narrative through text and paratext in progressive rock is insightful and convincing. What I find contentious is the dismissal of three minutes of pop romance at level 1 on the assumption that meaning resides in and arises out of a composite of tangible, easily identifiable, and directly related "texts"—song lyrics, musical structures, liner notes, art work, and the self-consciously conceptual artistic statements made by musicians. My challenge, and the point I argue for, is that there are other equally complex narrative meanings that are emergent in and articulated to many single pop songs, due to their embedding in a broader social and cultural context. In suggesting that Nicholls's approach is unnecessarily limited by its focus on musical text and identifiable supporting paratexts, I take a cue from Lawrence Kramer's argument that narrative cannot provide a means of "illuminating musical structure and musical unity" because the very "fractious and disorderly" character of narrative disrupts the stability of a text and points outward at the real drama of performative actions (rather than the perceived drama of the music), toward the "social and cultural" tensions of the human world.[13] Narrative ineluctably leads from the text to the historical circumstances through which the meaning of texts are mediated, interpreted, and contested.

II

Songs do not convey narrative meanings as texts alone or in relation to the supporting conceptual package. Songs exist in relation to other songs. The practice of songwriting and acts of interpretation are embedded within grids of intertextuality. Popular songwriters may explicitly or unconsciously draw their inspiration from other songs and sometimes unambiguously, or often obliquely, reference, acknowledge, celebrate, or comment upon these other songs.[14] Even if the inspiration is implicit or unacknowledged, songs are heard alongside and in relation to other songs (by songwriter and listener alike). This is integral to how they narrate the world to us. I will substantiate and develop this point further by returning to Nicholls's example of "I Want to Hold Your Hand"—a song he describes in these terms:

> The lyrics of the song paint a typically static romantic cameo, in which the protagonist expresses his feelings directly to the antagonist. Although there are slight changes of perspective in the exhortations of verse 2 and the more reflective stance of the middle 8 (accompanied in the latter case by a new melodic and harmonic setting), the text merely amplifies the statements already made by the protagonist, rather than suggesting any actual narrative discourse.[15]

Nicholls's claim can be contrasted with a perspective offered by Barbara Bradby in an article in which she analyzes the profound influence on the Beatles of the late 1950s and early 1960s girl groups. The Beatles were open in acknowledging their love of girl group music. They performed and recorded cover versions, toured with girl groups, and the influence is evident in their lyric writing (offering different viewpoints and dialogue), song structures, harmonic sequences, and use of voices (Lennon and McCartney's unison singing and the three-part harmony and vocal exchanges between Lennon, McCartney, and Harrison). Hence, the song "I Want to Hold Your Hand"—in terms of songwriting performance practice and contextually—arises within a set of musical and cultural chains that cannot be decoupled from the text if seeking to understand the narrative meaning of the song. Indeed, Bradby suggests that girl groups established a "discourse to which the Beatles had to *respond*."[16]

Bradby pinpoints a contrast between the more passive plea in the lyrics for "you" to "let me be your man / hold your hand" with that of an "opening narrative device, 'Now I'll tell you . . . ' and the semi-narrative 'When I touch you.'"[17] Bradby hears and reads unfolding narrative and semi-narrative features in the lyrics. These in turn are part of a broader narrative whereby the Beatles were offering a reciprocation of the girl group desire for "you" to love "me." Girl group songs had typically presented a singer talking about a boy in conversation with peers and chorus. The Beatles engaged in dialogue with this theme, mediating girl talk to the male world, most famously in "She Loves You" with its lyric of "She told me what to say." Bradby argues that "I Want to Hold Your Hand" presents a more tentative form of desire than the conventional male plea of "I want you," drawing directly from the Chantels' "Maybe," a song containing a desire for romantic holding hands as a route toward mutual understanding. Through a nuanced linguistic analysis of address in the Beatles songs of this period, Bradby goes on to argue that

> the Beatles' declarations of love in their first few hit songs did not come out of the blue nor are they simply a direct descendant of a line of male,

> or even boy-group, discourse. They are a response to, and in dialogue with, the voicing in girl talk by the Shirelles of the ubiquitous female request for men to tell women that they love them.[18]

Bradby's research challenges Nicholls's basic assumption: there *is* a narrative in the lyrics, the movement is not "static" as he suggests. Furthermore, the narrative acquires a sense of urgency through the way the song establishes an intertextual and social dialogue with girl group discourse. It is an ongoing story about male/female or boy/girl romance mediated by the popular song.

But the narrative is not just conveyed through the words. The lyrics of "I Want to Hold Your Hand" are heard through the "drama" of the music. Here I draw from Fred Everett Maus's observation that listeners often "follow" the meaning of instrumental music by drawing from a pool of knowledge that allows them to comprehend "commonplace human action in everyday life," personifying musical sounds that become regarded as characters, gestures, and intentional actions.[19] Evaluating the application of narrative theory to instrumental art music, Maus suggests that "music may often be closer to drama than to prose narrative, offering enactments of stories rather than storytelling in the most literal sense."[20] The drama of the music certainly *contributes* to the enactment of the scene in "I Want to Hold Your Hand"—providing an instrumental and rhythmic dynamic that may be heard as "a drama of interacting agents."[21]

These musical elements have been discussed by a number of authors, with much comment devoted to the moment where the vocal melody rises an octave on the lyric "hand" as the chords move from E minor to an ambiguous B chord (various analysts and musicians have identified this chord as a B, B minor, B7, or B5) and then to C. This is a pivotal instant of drama and animation in the song's narrative. When he recalled writing the song with McCartney, Lennon referred to the inclusion of a particular chord (one he did not specify) in this sequence, remarking that it "made the song." Walter Everett identifies it as a "deceptive" E minor.[22] But Dominic Pedler disagrees and insists that Lennon was referring to the movement to the B chord, arguing that it is this that gives this passage "propulsion."[23] Ian MacDonald also believed Lennon to be referring to the B chord and described the song as

> so dense with incident that McCartney's octave jump into falsetto at the end of the verse is preempted by another shock four bars earlier: a plunge from the home key of G major onto an unstable B minor. . . . It

> was exciting, unexpected, irreverent—and in practice made to seem natural by the beatific energy with which the group belted it out.[24]

Everett also writes of the "drama" created by the transitions between sections of the song and of how its textural, rhythmic, and motivic factors contribute to the song's unfolding tale.[25] Further drama is created through the vocals. Although Lennon takes the "lead," the two composers characteristically shift between singing in unison and singing in harmony, with McCartney varying his harmonizing between the first and second repeated "middle 8" section—"And when I touch you." This section also contains the dramatic crescendo in which McCartney's vocal dynamically interacts with Lennon's in reaching up to a faltering falsetto on the repetition of "I can't hide"; a rising phrase that Bob Dylan famously, and perhaps not surprisingly given this euphoric moment, first heard as "I get high" and interpreted as signaling a drug-enhanced peak.[26]

The rhythms also contribute to the excitement, accentuated by the handclaps. On the recording, even remastered, the handclaps sound rather thin, a bit rhythmically irregular and vulnerable when compared with the later use of synthetically produced handclaps in recordings. This contributes to the sense of dramatic occasion, the handclap being a dynamic sonic presence and familiar as the most elementary way of participating in the performance of a song. The handclap is both material and symbolic, carrying associations of collective enactment, approval (applause), and a connection to childhood play. The handclaps in "I Want to Hold Your Hand" and other Beatles songs provide a signifying link to nursery rhymes and memories of childhood innocence (these are pervasive themes and influences for the Beatles).[27]

The above is offered as a challenge to Nicholls's characterization of "I Want to Hold Your Hand" as a song that "contains no meaningful narrative elements."[28] The lyrics are dynamic, rather than static words on a page, and can be interpreted as narrating an everyday encounter through the interplay of sung words and dynamic, dramatically interacting musical elements. The textual narrative arises from the poetics of the lyrics, the rhetoric of the vocal performance, and dramaturgy of the music and rhythm.

Social and semiotic chains of narrative meaning connect the recording of "I Want to Hold Your Hand" (along with many other Beatles songs from this period) to the songs of girl groups and the Beatles' male contemporaries. This is just one example of how songs continually enter narrative dialogues with other songs, whether or not it is conscious or intentional on the part of the songwriter. The popular

song, in form, practice, and character, is never reference-free; no song can be totally "original" in the sense of having no precursors. Whether anticipated by its composer or interpreted by its listener, the song will signal, acknowledge, and pay some form of homage to its sources and inspiration.

"I Want to Hold Your Hand" is integral to a broader narrative that articulates the tensions and transformations in romantic relations between boys and girls, young women and men. The song arises out of, is embedded within, and is also an intervention in the stories through which human relationships are mediated and comprehended. It is an example of how a song's meaning is simultaneously contextual and social. Or, as I now shall argue, song meanings are intersubjective and intercontextual—and the interpreting author is part of these dialogues.

III

Although it has become commonplace for anthropologists and ethnomusicologists reflexively to locate themselves in their work, such a strategy is rare in musicology, and can usually be found in writings in which the musicologist positions her or himself sociologically.[29] It is uncommon for musicologists to expose their esthetic preferences, musical skills, social background, educational experiences, or even the manner in which they listen to the recordings referred to in their work. Even self-defined "critical musicologists"—attuned to the theoretical and pragmatic possibilities for varied interpretation, aware that songs are mediated technologically, socially, and commercially—offer little by way of the situational context that has informed their choice of repertoire, listening strategy, and analytical approach. To pursue this, I take a critical route through three perspectives on the question of individual reception and authoritative interpretation.

I start with the concept of "subject position," an idea advanced in musicology by Eric Clarke and Nicola Dibben when seeking to connect formal musicological analysis and critical interpretation to the social meaning of songs for listeners. Drawing the term "subject position" from its development in Althusserian Marxism and psychoanalysis (to explain the limiting and oppressive workings of dominant social structures and ideologies) and the way it was incorporated into film studies, Clarke argues that the concept of subject position allows for an understanding of how a text (a film or music, for example) is such that it "demands," "solicits," and "limits" the perceptions of an audience member.[30]

Clarke uses this concept when comparing the recorded performance of "Magdalena" by Frank Zappa with that of P. J. Harvey's "Taut";

Dibben deploys the idea in an analysis of the songs and imagery associated with Pulp's *This Is Hardcore* and, through this, in arguments about the impact of Jarvis Cocker's songs. Both writers use the notion of subject position to claim a clear link between listeners' comprehension and their analytical interpretation of "musical material," arguing that the "features of the musical materials specify the subject-position of the song."[31]

Clarke describes in detail the contrasting gendered characteristics and connotations of the sonic, vocal, and lyrical qualities of the Zappa and Harvey tracks and asserts that "subject-*matter* and subject-*position* interact in a compelling manner."[32] Using the same concept, and citing its use by Clarke, Dibben presents an analysis of how Pulp—or specifically, Jarvis Cocker as a songwriter and singer—create a critical, if ambiguous, perspective on masculinity and pornography through visual imagery, song lyrics, use of voice, lead guitar motives, and instrumental timbres. As textual analysis of how a highly idiosyncratic musical identity containing "a bleak and ironic view of the single male"[33] has been produced through an album package, Dibben's analysis is insightful and convincing. However, to this textual analysis, Dibben adds theory drawn from psychoanalysis and cinema spectatorship, arguing that the "subject matter" of the album (lyrics as semantic statements, guitars as sexual signifiers, images alluding to the conventions of a male gaze in heterosexual pornography) is such that it "solicits" and "positions" the listener into a "place" from which their understanding of the music and imagery ineluctably corresponds with the interpretation of the musicological analyst. In the case of Pulp, this "subject position" is assumed to incorporate a cultural critique of various assumptions about the masculine response to pornography.

Clarke and Dibben offer astute musicological insights and plausible interpretations of the songs of Zappa, Harvey, and Pulp, respectively. But they both take large leaps outward when claiming that their musicological hermeneutic analysis has identified the content that positions "subjects," assuming that their interpretations are comprehensive enough to contain the meanings with which all listeners will have to contend. The claim that analysis has revealed a broader subject position is asserted rather than demonstrated with any evidence of what other members of the audience may think about these songs. The claim to have identified the "position" of a unified and rather abstracted "subject" (all those listening to the recordings?) is based on little more than interpretation of the "musical materials."

A different approach is offered by Tia DeNora when challenging the "concealed authoritarianism" of what she calls "armchair

hermeneutics," arguing that it ignores the way people "use" music in their lives.[34] Indeed, Clarke subsequently modified the strength of his argument in response to such an objection, claiming that a "subject position" approach can "define an area of possibilities within which different empirical individuals may take up their own particular positions."[35] However, DeNora's response to such a caveat would seem to be that this is still speculative unless the "empirical individuals" are studied. Through her research, DeNora has repeatedly attempted to show how people use music in ways and in "positions" that are not so easily predicted. Instead of starting with the text or "musical materials" (the song, composition, or track), she privileges the circumstances. For example, she writes of how many people turn to music when dealing with difficult moments of tragedy or loss in their lives—one of DeNora's respondents listened to a Brahms concerto when recalling aspects of her relationship with her father after his death; the novelist Anthony Burgess listened to Beethoven when working out a plot for a novel; a track carefully constructed in a studio by George Michael was incorporated into the ritual of selecting and purchasing clothes.[36]

If Clarke and Dibben are concerned with the determining character of songs and music—the way "texts" influence values, knowledge, and esthetic understanding—DeNora instead finds reflexively aware, freely active citizens: "Listeners are by no means simply 'affected' by music but are, rather, active in constructing their 'passivity' to music."[37] If Clarke and Dibben seek to highlight the significant impact of a subtle guitar timbre or a quirkily vocalized turn of phrase, DeNora downplays the defining qualities of songs or concertos, inadvertently perhaps, allowing them to become little more than a secondary means toward some more significant sociological end. This is because she wants to move the argument "to a far more general notion of how different types of musical materials may afford different actors different things at different times."[38] Yet, it then seems as if any type of music can stand in as a resource or device in a whole range of situations, and this is how it acquires its sociological value. Music becomes a means for working through an emotional difficulty, physical task, habitual routine, or intellectual problem. It appears to be no different than other "resources" we might have at our disposal, such as drinking a glass of wine, walking through a forest, smoking a cigarette, or swimming. There is something salutary in this sort of approach. After all, not everyone wants to spend inordinate amounts of time debating the meaning and influence of a lone cadence, poetic phrase, or guitar riff. But for those of us who do, and for those of us who want to argue that it is important because there *is* a quite profound connection between the esthetic qualities of a

symphony or song and social life, then DeNora's approach comes close to breaking the connections by siding with the user's viewpoint.

An attempt to retain the link to the musical text and to acknowledge De Nora's emphasis on the varied uses of music by subjects has been offered by Chris Kennett when proposing that the meaning of any recording is variable and indelibly mediated by "the temporal, demographic, attentive, local and task-related particulars of the listening situation. . . . [These] . . . conspire to dilute the analytical meanings of the well-parsed text to such an extent that the absolute sound recording ceases to exist as an object of analysis."[39] Critiquing Richard Middleton's wish to avoid "monological" interpretations of songs (he also targets analysis by Allan Moore and Philip Tagg), Kennett argues that "personal listening" is all that scholars can legitimately offer: "One interpretation of a recording is just that—one person's nonnormative way of understanding a musical text, arrived at through several immersive, concentrated listenings (through hi-fi speakers or headphones, without interruption or diversion) to the recording at home, or in one's office—and nothing more absolute than that."[40]

Kennett initially supports this position with reference to observations of the musical preferences and listening strategies of visitors to a wine shop in which drum and bass is playing.[41] He illustrates his case further through what he calls an "idioethnomusicology" of Herb Alpert's "Tijuana Taxi," heard as the Leyton Orient football team trot on to the pitch prior to games in East London, the musical content comprehended though this ritual. Contextualizing his understanding of the song's meaning in relation to the unsophisticated tactics of the football team, and supporting this interpretation of the music with some highly personal details about himself (including his class background, a disability, schooling, his parents, selective life experiences and obsessions, along with knowledge of sport and wine), Kennett seeks to illustrate in detail the formation of his "personal" musicological analysis. His overall point is that "the listener's demography or prior lived experience" will "change the very nature of the text."[42]

The ironic catch in such an idio-autobiographical, obsessively existential analysis is that Kennett has arrived at such a meaning through constant social interactions—it is not quite as "personal" as he would claim. Kennett acknowledges that "the only people with any likelihood of sharing much of an overlap with my analysis of the song are fellow Orient fans."[43] However, I would question his use of the term "sharing" here. As humans we can share in, and reach a broad consensus about the meaning, value, and ethical or political significance of many texts, artifacts, and practices without necessarily sharing the same demography

or prior lived experience (this is, after all, how an understanding of language is acquired). We may never have seen the Leyton Orient Football Club play, but we may empathize with this interpretation of "Tijuana Taxi."[44] Despite Clarke's claim that the "musical materials" can reveal the possible interpretations of subjects, I doubt whether an analysis that started with the musical materials of "Tijuana Taxi" would have led to the Leyton Orient football stadium in East London—which is, in many respects, Kennett's point.

If Clarke and Dibben avoid such variable interpretations by positing a subject position that corresponds to their analysis of selective musical materials, Kennett evades the way that many people can share a similar understanding of a song but be different in all manner of personal quirks and idiosyncrasies.[45] If Kennett makes the conditions of listening (a wine shop or a football stadium) dominate his interpretation—"the listening experience *becomes* the text"[46]—Dibben and Clarke offer an abstract placeless context: did they listen at home, in the office, in a car? If Kennett's fandom and esthetic choices are conspicuous due to their elevated presence, Dibben's and Clarke's preferences are conspicuous by their absence. (I might infer that Dibben is a fan of Pulp, that Clarke is a fan of P. J. Harvey but not Frank Zappa, but neither make it part of their argument.) This issue is not tangential or extraneous. Both Simon Frith and Ian Maxwell have argued, adding weight to Kennett's point, that the selection of music and musicians as objects of study and academic analysis is informed by tacit if often unacknowledged value judgments, personal preferences, and passions. In Maxwell's terms, it is the "curse of fandom"—a burden that poses problems and possibilities.[47] At the core of these contrasting positions are questions about how musicology moves outward from "the musical materials" or "text" to social circumstances, and acknowledges that such contexts are informed by personal as much as scholarly commitments to processes of interpretation.

One way of disrupting such movements, drawing from narratology, might be to make a distinction between the "point of view" *presented* to any listener through a text, and the way this may or may not construct a "subject position" as a set of sonic, social, and semantic possibilities from which a self may "negotiate" that text. The term "point of view" refers to the vantage point from which the story is conveyed, described by H. Porter Abbott as the "the lens through which we see characters and events in the narrative. Frequently, the narrator is our focalizer. Just as we hear her voice, we often see the action through her eyes."[48] For example, in Lennon and McCartney's folk-style ballad "You've Got to Hide Your Love Away," the narrator of the song is worrying that he

might have lost his love, and the listener hears an exchange between the narrator and the "clowns" that are telling him to hide his love. We hear the clowns ("Hey! You've got to . . .") from the point of view of the narrator. In the country blues-inflected "You've Got a Friend in Me," the narrator sings from the point of view of the toy Woody addressing the child Andy in *Toy Story 1*. In later films in the *Toy Story* series, the song is included, performed in different styles and arrangements, to represent the viewpoint of all Andy's toys. The song is also used in various ironic, intertextual, and self-referential ways—for example, adding a degree of pathos to the narrative of Andy's growing up and eventual farewell to toys along with the family home.

In considering the point of view, I do not need to assume that the track sung by John Lennon or the *Toy Story* film song constructs a position for listeners, and I can acknowledge that the songs—if rendered by other performers on albums or in concert—may offer potentials for alternative interpretations. I might hear the narrator of the Beatles' song as telling me, a listener, to hide my love away (the performance, instrumentation, arrangement, or vocal intonation along with my casual distracted attention while queuing for a drink may lead to such an interpretation). Or I might hear it as an interior dialogue, the narrator talking to himself. Taken out of its location within the films, "You've Got a Friend in Me" may be used to convey a sense of friendship between adults, or between children and an animal pet, rather than a toy and a boy. The song's ambiguity allows for these different interpretations. Indeed, the craft of songwriter Randy Newman, skilled in the art of irony and versed in screen music, and the song's use across three films by animation company Pixar, adroit at creating life histories and emotions from animated images, is a reminder of the poetic possibilities of ambiguity. In a book first published in 1930, William Empson explored the interpretive value of ambiguity, referring to "any verbal nuance, however slight, which gives room for alternative reactions to the same piece of language" whereby "alternative views might be taken without sheer misreading."[49] Empson argued that "the machinations of ambiguity are among the very roots of poetry,"[50] and they certainly pervade the creation and comprehension of popular songs. Yet, as Umberto Eco has also stressed, there are "limits of the act of interpretation."[51] It is misleading to declare that all we can offer is an endless plurality of personal listening. "You've Got a Friend in Me" is not a song conveying dialogues from the French Revolution of 1789; it is not a song in support of the destruction of toys or the culling of badgers; it is not about moonlight on a stormy sea, nor does it refer to the tensions between the Romulans and Vulcans. It might perhaps be possible to explain the circumstances

within which an individual may interpret the song in one of these ways—the internet provides plenty of examples of misheard lyrics and eccentric understandings of songs. But these endure as ironic anecdotal oddities—rather than convincing contributions to discussions about songs and their social resonances.[52] When considering the multiple interpretations of personal listeners, we cannot evade questions of plausibility, "misreading," and "overinterpretation."[53]

In the remainder of this article, I argue for the adoption of an intermediate position: an approach that is attuned to the limitations of both the authoritative, monological, objective, definitive, or dominant interpretation and the pluralist, solipsistic, subjective, individual, or personal perspective. I also argue for a series of related hermeneutic and analytical shifts; from position to process, from personal and subjective to interpersonal and intersubjective, and from the located and spatial context to the historical and temporal intercontext. From metaphors of static places and locations to metaphors of movement and change—from interpretations that are fixed to locations—the clothes shop, the academic study, the football stadium—to interpretations that are changing, in process, moving through time.

IV

In developing my argument in this direction, I am drawing from Paul Ricoeur's wide-ranging philosophical investigations in which he has stressed how self-understanding is realized through narratives that give order to the uncertainties and unknowns of our temporal existence. We comprehend ourselves and the world we inhabit through the stories we tell.[54] Our narratives include the telling of our social encounters; hence, Ricoeur's approach implies that "all communicative action must be hermeneutically grounded because it is always intersubjectively mediated."[55] Such a Ricoeurian notion of intersubjectivity attempts to "preserve the uniqueness of self-identity while at the same time bridging the gap between self and other."[56] Although his philosophical reflections were developed from a detailed study of literary fiction and history, Ricoeur argued for an inclusive approach to narrative, imagination, and history for a "complementarity" and a "convergence of the different modes of narrative discourse" whereby "the intersubjective field of temporal experience" bridges and connects "the most 'fictional,' such as tales, romances, dramas, novels, and movies, to the most "empirical," including histories, biographies, and autobiographies."[57]

Ricoeur's hermeneutics constitute just one strand within a considerable body of writing that starts from Edmund Husserl's argument that

any "objective" understanding of the world is "intersubjective." Though there are various debates in this literature and different inflections for the term, in this essay I draw on Nick Crossley's suggestion that a focus on intersubjectivity allows for a consideration of "the fabric of social becoming," a metaphor suggesting "a certain material basis, a corporeal intertwining."[58]

Such a process of becoming is also implied in a related concept, that of "intercontextuality" as developed by David Bloome and his colleagues in studies of how classroom learning takes place cumulatively over time (days, weeks, months, years). Understandings produced in the present are the result of interactions that draw upon existing knowledge and memories, which in the process move constantly from individual to collective. The intercontextual accumulation of knowledge through time links events in such a way that "people react not only to immediately contiguous acts but also to acts separated in time and space and they may react to a set of acts."[59]

I illustrate, explore, and develop the value of this approach with reference to the song "Kid Charlemagne," which appeared as the opening track on Steely Dan's 1976 album *The Royal Scam*. In doing so, I tentatively retain a sense of "personal listening" as advocated by Kennett—not seeking to conceal myself in the interpretation of this song. But I also emphasize the intersubjective and intercontextual dynamics through which a shared understanding of the song is created—that my understanding can never be unique but always realized in relation to the actions, values, and views of other people. Due to this emphasis, I do not present a privileged "text" as abstracted song lyric or musical examples on a page; I want to convey a sense of how my understanding of this song has emerged cumulatively and intersubjectively.[60] The music can be heard, and the band seen at various freely accessible YouTube sites. I hope that my overall argument stands, even for readers unfamiliar with the specific song.

Steely Dan is songwriters Donald Fagen and Walter Becker (keyboards and bass, respectively), supported by a host of accomplished varying musicians, releasing albums between 1972 and 1980, and following a long gap, from 2000 onward. In a musicological analysis of their style, Everett noted that although "nominally a rock band . . . the group's melodic idiosyncrasies, busy rhythmic surface, and harmonic and voice-leading techniques are direct descendants of early modern jazz, making the corpus arguably the most tonally complex of any rock music with such broad popularity."[61] The lyrics to the songs show the influence of 1950s science fiction (notably A. E. van Vogt and Alfred Bester), along with ironists such as Thomas Berger, Philip Roth, and Kurt Vonnegut.

At the same time, the songs exhibit a knowing familiarity with and referencing of harmonic, verbal, and structural tricks from the "Great American Songbook." Of their approach to songs, Fagen explained, "We were after a theatrical effect, the friction produced by the mix of the music and the irony of the lyrics."[62] The narrators are often deluded loners or dreamers, romantic male losers peering at life from the periphery. The influence of Bob Dylan is apparent, not only in a certain lyrical tone but in Fagen's untrained, understated, dry, wry, and slightly pinched nasal vocal delivery. Although the majority of songs are narrated in the first person, they are quite obviously delivered by characters, the songwriters operating at a knowing critical distance from "confessional" or autobiographical writing.[63]

When I first heard the track "Kid Charlemagne," I had no clear idea what the song was "about." I responded according to my immediate points of reference at the time; so I heard a blend of disco-funk groove, insistent hissing hi-hat, and smooth bell-like resonant Fender Rhodes electronic piano mixed with the squelchy staccato tones of the clavinet (an unavoidable reference point being Stevie Wonder's influential clavinet-driven "Superstition"). I recall vocal phrases leaping out and being intrigued by impressions of an unfolding tale of tension, anxiety, and release that was in some way concerned with marginal or criminal activity from which a central protagonist wished to escape. I had only become familiar with Steely Dan a year or so prior to the release of this track and had not been following their recordings since their first album in 1972. I was not a "fan" at the time of first hearing this song (played for me by a neighborhood friend), but I was in the process of becoming one, particularly through my engagement with the album *The Royal Scam* in which "Kid Charlemagne" is the opening song. My decision to use the song in teaching—an experience from which I shall draw—is inevitably based on periods of intensive listening, reading about, discussion, and reflection upon the song.

Just over thirty years after its first release, in 2007, I played the song to a group of predominantly British undergraduate music students (taking pathways in both popular and Western art music) in a class in which we were exploring the different ways that songs tell stories. At the time I was not playing it with a view to later reflecting upon and writing up the experience and thus I was initially disappointed that none of the thirty-five or so students (aged from nineteen to twenty-three) had previously heard the track. I played it once without providing any context or information. I asked if anyone would like to tell me what the song was about. I found no suggestions, no one felt confident enough to

publicly volunteer an opinion based on one, decontextualized listen within the unequal, constrained circumstances of a teaching encounter.

I then provided the class with a prepared lyric sheet on which I had made various notes relating to shifts of perspective and changes to vocal emphasis. The opening lines set the scene: "While the music played you worked by candlelight, those San Francisco nights . . . just by chance you crossed the diamond with the pearl, you turned it on the world." I was attempting to introduce the class to basic concepts of narrative theory and I noted that the song begins in the past tense with a narrator seeking to occupy a second-person point of view or, more plausibly, telling the story as a first person seeking to imagine the second person's perspective; this becomes apparent with the line "Did you feel like Jesus?" Any sense of optimism evaporates at the end of the second verse when the protagonists feels his "whole world fall apart and fade away." The third verse shifts from the past to the present tense and evokes a situation characterized by images of debt ("Your patrons have all left you in the red"), death ("Low-rent friends are dead"), and deception. The second-person "you" is still being addressed by a first-person "I," a detached commentator on events. The last verse remains in the present tense, but the point of view shifts; the narrator has quite clearly become an anxious participant ("Clean this mess up else we'll all end up in jail"). Throughout the song the chorus returns with the "Get along, get along Kid Charlemagne" refrain (more or less chanted, rhythmically in unison, the harmonies mixed down). Each time, it acquires additional resonances, as the plot progresses through the verses, from its first appearance, which may be interpreted as a colloquial "Get along with you," to its appearance after the final verse, which may be heard as "Get out of here."[64]

Having circulated lightly notated lyrics, I played the recording through again. The second listen allowed for a discussion and, quite quickly, a debate that moved toward an interpretation of the song. There were various opinions about just what was being manufactured—the literal production of a blend of "diamonds" and "pearls" in the lyric was quickly discounted. It was not long before the conversation reached a point where the class agreed that the song was about the production of illegal drugs. The students had quite clearly been drawing on their existing "intercontextual" knowledge of songs, references to drugs in popular culture, and a range of related experiences and information.

When the class conversation reached this point, I intervened more directly and explained how the lyrical narrative of "Kid Charlemagne" can be interpreted as making direct references to a period in the life of Owsley Stanley, who manufactured and supplied LSD to the counterculture

during the 1960s. His identity is partially camouflaged in lyrics that evoke the name of ("Kid") Charlemagne—setting in play associations with a historical figure, Charles the Great. Stanley, feted as the first "underground" chemist to produce LSD, was reputed to have produced and supplied over a million doses. Contemporary connoisseurs of the drug praised its apparent purity, a quality alluded to in the song's lyrics. A further infamous incident has Stanley being arrested after his car ran out of gasoline. Whether or not this is apocryphal, the lyrics mention this ("Is there gas in the car?"). Shortly after the album's release, the rock critic Max Bell described the stance in the lyrics as "unromantic, precise and factual" arguing that the song does not convey "any mood other than ambivalence."[65]

When I suggested that the drug in question was LSD and offered these background details of Stanley Owsley, I received a mixed reaction from the class. Some students were excited and intrigued by the narrative, whereas others were mildly shocked that the drug was portrayed from the perspective of a manufacturer and participant. There was some disagreement about whether the song might be interpreted as a morality tale in which the villain got his comeuppance, an endorsement of the drug or an ethically neutral and factual portrayal of the protagonists. Consistent with Bell's view of the song's ambivalence, such responses were also indicative of how changing attitudes toward and experiences of drugs among students have subsequently inflected interpretations of the song. John Markert's study of "drug lyrics in popular music," drawing on interpretations of lyrics and opinion surveys over a forty-year period, suggests that though LSD tended to be uncritically celebrated in songs of the late 1960s, an uncertainty crept in by the middle of the 1970s (when "Kid Charlemagne" was released) which then turned to more negative judgments and critical portrayals in the 1980s.[66]

Although lyrics will inevitably play an important part in the discussion of the meaning of popular songs, the music and rhythms also aroused comment. The class included accomplished musicians, and without prompting students remarked on the use of jazz chords and judged the effectiveness of certain chord sequences. "Kid Charlemagne" opens with a repeated C7(#9) chord before dropping to an unexpected A minor, as if moving down into a song world we might not have anticipated. This is followed by what might be heard as a "predictable" Aeolian fall from A minor through G, then to F, but this is undercut by a subsequent move to a Bb7(add6) before returning to the A minor.[67] Though the chords cannot necessarily be identified precisely on one or two listens, the disruption of this sequence (along with the opening) was heard as conveying a sense of unease and melodrama and was judged by the students as integral to the narrative. Some students

observed how the drums are used in the song to convey urgency and desperation. Also singled out was an extended virtuoso guitar solo performed by Larry Carlton that forms a bridge between verses 2 and 3: an instrumental interlude that allows for a segue from the narrator as detached observer to anxious participant, personifying the narrator's changed demeanor and point of view—from flowing melodic calm through hesitation to anxiety.

I subsequently followed up the more or less spontaneous classroom conversation by researching exchanges about this song in various internet forums and by talking with other trained and nontrained music listeners.[68] I have found comparable, yet often more intense and elaborated exchanges about this song among fans, individuals usually more knowledgeable of the band and aware of Steely Dan's blend of musical characteristics, lyrical concerns, attention to details, and idiosyncratic sensibility.

Steely Dan albums are constructed with an awareness of how their songs, composed for recordings, are listened to hundreds of times by fans, which influences the insertion of musical and lyrical references to obscure jazz recordings, novels, real events, and people, along with sonic and verbal quotes, puns, and allusions. The meaning of songs and their lyrics is not acquired through one listen. It builds up from repeated listens. As I mentioned earlier, lyrics may be misunderstood or incomprehensible on a first listen. The listener might initially respond to the texture or grain of a particular voice, to the words as nonsemantic sounds to prominent key words. Lyrics assume greater significance and accumulate meaning with repeated listening, from discussions with other fans, and from reading commentaries, criticism, and interviews. Fans of all genres, musicians, and aspiring songwriters may copy lyrics into notebooks, or type them up (just as older composers copied out scores by hand), amending their versions as a result of repeated listening and conversations with others.

The interpretative activities of Steely Dan fans are evidenced in an "anecdotal survey" conducted by journalist Robert Toth. He provides an insight into the intensity with which fans listen to and follow up lyrical and musical references and illustrates the way fans think of their engagement with the songs as part of a "musical education." Toth's interviewees valued Steely Dan for their "irreverence and complexity," their "cynicism and humor," and "craftsmanship." Most fans developed a love of the band incrementally through an ongoing process rather than through one epiphanous moment, although epiphanies—"musical awakenings"—were recounted on some of the fans' trajectories.[69] Toth illustrates how musicians offer a point of identification—in this case for

those who sense an affiliation to the wry, knowing "outsider" stance.[70] He also provides illuminating examples of the time and effort committed by devotees when interpreting the musical and lyrical reference points, entailing intersubjective dialogues with others that contribute to "a special vibe among Steely Dan fans."[71]

During the class discussion, I had to admit to the students that I did not have answers to some of the specific questions they raised about drugs and the counterculture. Having encountered the LSD manufacturer "Kid Charlemagne," it was but a short step to questions concerning other songs about LSD and to writings about the counterculture. The students were seeking to bring their own partial knowledge of history to bear on the interpretation of a song, and this was meeting with my own limited knowledge of songs and this period in history. For me, it was a concrete, tangible everyday experience that illustrated how songs are both imaginative fictions and part of intersubjective dialogues about history. My immediate response was to find out more—to research further details about the counterculture, and songs about LSD and Owsley Stanley.

An obvious reference point is Sheila Whiteley's analysis of songs and the counterculture, in which she notes that though some songwriters (like novelists and poets) sought to directly evoke their experience of taking LSD, often informed by a mystical or metaphysical quest for philosophical enlightenment, far more followed a fad for creating psychedelic-sounding records. The psychedelic esthetic sought to emphasize a heightened awareness of the senses (represented through exaggerated use of echo and effects in sound production, and intensely bright timbres); a distorted sense of reality (sounds oscillating or hanging suspended before fading); the synesthetic merging of the senses and the evocation of innocent, fairy-tale or dream-like states of consciousness, conveyed through surreal lyrics, and the use of echo, reverb, dramatic and sudden edits, collages, or abrupt changes of tempo or timbre.[72]

Any popular song that concerns the drug LSD will establish links to an identifiable body of songs. But "Kid Charlemagne" is unusual because it narrates the activities of a very specific character actively making and supplying the drug. It does not attempt to evoke the drug experience, nor does it incorporate any form of psychedelic coding. Indeed, its jazz harmonies and voicing, along with disco and funk elements, offset any overt rock elements that might be associated with the electric guitar. Musically, a distance is created from the evocation of the LSD experience.

Lyrically, the activities of the central protagonist Owsley Stanley are narrated with a degree of distance from the experience of taking the

drug and are consonant with how he has been portrayed in historical accounts of the period. In a book subtitled "LSD and the American dream," Jay Stevens devotes a chapter titled "The Alchemist" to Stanley, claiming that *Newsweek* compared him to Henry Ford. He portrays him as a talented, eccentric, intelligent man with many theories feeding a mission to "save the world by making the purest and cheapest and most abundant LSD possible."[73] Stevens charts how a mixture of ideas circulating from chemistry, Eastern mysticism, and literary creativity fed a belief that "Owsley's career as an underground chemist was graced by divine approval"[74]—in the words of the Steely Dan song, he may well have "felt like Jesus." Martin Lee and Bruce Shlain, in a similar way, portray a man who, in the hippie district of Haight-Ashbury, was known as "the unofficial mayor of San Francisco" and "cultivated an image as a wizard-alchemist whose intensions with LSD were priestly and magical."[75] The backdrop to Stanley's activities was a sharp contrast between the will to change the world "for all" through collective political engagement with civil rights and antiwar protest and the desire for "tuning in and dropping out," which offered the individual a solipsistic "promise of transcendence of that world."[76]

The ironies, contradictions, and absurdities are registered in three songs of the period. Stanley had been an audio engineer for the Grateful Dead and is credited with making a significant contribution to their live sound. In 1966, the Grateful Dead began performing a song with the title "Alice D Millionaire" (a play on words that wryly cites the newspaper headline following Stanley's first arrest, "LSD Millionaire Arrested"). Musically, a mid-paced folk-rock arrangement, the lyrics to the song address a "girl" (Alice), but there can be little doubt that the third person is Owsley Stanley, as the lyric narrates the moment when his world was falling apart and fading away, opening by evoking a protagonist living in a "world of trouble" and moving on to suggest that his secret is out, "the walls are closing in" and "the wheel of fortune has a flat tire"—another reference to the infamous car breakdown that facilitated Stanley's arrest.

This largely sympathetic or neutral account might be heard alongside Frank Zappa's sarcastic "Who Needs the Peace Corps?" which appeared on *We're Only in It for the Money*, an album that pastiched the cover of the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* and ridiculed hippies, the counterculture, and the "summer of love." An arch and fussy musical arrangement, incorporating references to R&B along with modernist art music, "Who Needs the Peace Corps?" opens with a naïve first-person narrator declaring that he will "drop out" and go to San Francisco, purchase "a wig and sleep on Owsley's floor," and

continues to ridicule through images of "phony" stoned hippies and "psychedelic dungeons popping up on every street."

A further commentary is provided in the song "Mexico" recorded by Jefferson Airplane in 1970 and written by Grace Slick. Another typically mid-paced folk-rock song, it opens with the words "Owsley and Charlie, twins of the trade," celebrating the impact of drugs on the poetic imagination and narrating attempts to stop the transport of marijuana from Mexico into the United States. Caricaturing a man only referred to as "Richard" who aspires to be king (almost unambiguously then U.S. president Richard Nixon), it pays respect to drug suppliers and proclaims Owsley to be a "legend" for providing "righteous dope."

Zappa's mockery, the Grateful Dead's melancholy, Grace Slick's homage, and the docudrama of "Kid Charlemagne" all contribute to the cultural history of this period, mediating evaluations and commentaries on people and events, making a modest but not insignificant addition to an enduring series of (by no means consensual) narratives about the drug culture of San Francisco, its peculiarities and characters, its utopian dreams and instabilities, and its subsequent decline. "Kid Charlemagne" conveys a specific interpretation of history, provides a particular memory of events, and offers a critical commentary on a protagonist who rapidly moves from being likened to "Jesus" to being "obsolete."

Historical knowledge and understanding of any period is acquired, accumulated, and enstoried—narrated—through a panoply of cultural forms of which songs are an important part. "Kid Charlemagne" contributes to the conversations through which the past is documented and debated. As a song, it is one cultural form playing a part in the mediation of historic events to music fans now and to future historians. The song remembers, retells, and reevaluates. It links together a particular series of events, experiences, and moments in time, dramatizing these musically and lyrically. The meaning of "Kid Charlemagne" does not reside solely in its textual characteristics: the musical or textual "materials" of this song cannot manipulatively position us as "subjects." Equally, its meaning cannot be liberated by idiosyncratic social use or solipsistic personal listening strategy. "I Want to Hold Your Hand" or "Kid Charlemagne"—and any other popular song—is always part of an intersubjective, intercontextual conversation, during which interpretation is in progress, forever moving through the time—proffered, debated, adopted as plausible, or discarded as improbable.

V

I have supported this argument by drawing from classroom discussions, exchanges on internet sites, dialogues among fans, and informal talks about songs not because I seek to legitimize a fixed interpretation of "Kid Charlemagne," but because I want to highlight the intersubjective, intercontextual, and temporal dynamic to the way songs accumulate narrative meanings as they are interpreted through repeated listens and from conversations with others. Not only does meaning continually accrue, but the interpretation of narrative moves back and forth from specific song text to other songs, to knowledge of cultural forms (art, books, films) and personal experience. Hence, I am arguing that an exploration of intersubjective dialogue and the intercontextual accumulation of meaning provides a richer understanding of the meaning of songs than notions of "subject position" or "personal listening" that tend to emphasize location and place. It also allows for moving away from fixed or static accounts of song texts, toward a recognition of the life of songs, the way songs accumulate meaning through time. A sense of this dynamic was evoked by Bruce Springsteen when replying to an interviewer who asked about the interpretation of his songs, and in particular to the way that the song "Born in the U.S.A" had been appropriated for narrowly patriotic and politically right agendas that had not been foreseen by the songwriter:

> Meaning is a communal cocktail. There is no writer who writes something and then has the fascistic ability to dictate how it is perceived, y'know? That doesn't exist. And then you, as the artist, can react to your listener's responses. You can talk about it, you can speak before it, you can play it a different way. . . . It becomes part of an ongoing conversation. A conversation that is never truly over . . . once it is released, it literally is *released*. It's gone free. And as such, even though you're its creator, you are now part of the community that is discussing, fighting, arguing, enjoying the conversation over its meaning. You may have an ace up your sleeve in that you can go out and play it a certain way on another night, but then you are simply adding to that conversation, you are never going to completely define that conversation—no one really can.[77]

The interesting point for me about this quote is not that it highlights the way songs are open to different interpretations, which is by now a commonplace. Instead, it is the way Springsteen acknowledges that the meaning of songs emerge cumulatively, in an unfinished way as part of an intersubjective, intercontextual, and "communal" conversation

(which does not need to imply a "community" in any united or shared sense of the term). Such "conversations" are typical of how the narrative meanings of songs are understood.

Narratives—the stories we tell about our experiences, observations, and imaginings—cannot be comprehended and constrained within or by any one text. Hence, my discussion of "I Want to Hold Your Hand" as an example of the difficulty of defining a "non-narrative" popular music text. Songs are produced and perceived within grids of intertextuality and intercontextuality—semiotics chains, networks of social encounters within which interpretations are proposed, debated, accepted, or rejected, a dialogue that continues into the future.

I have followed Ricoeur in arguing that we humans narrate our daily triumphs and tribulations through fictions and histories that are both personal and collective. Interpretation and narrative are intersubjective. But this does not mean that all subjects and their interpretations are equal. The sociology of cultural production provides persuasive evidence of how opportunities are shaped by social environments and institutions, structuring and mediating individual and group abilities to participate in such hermeneutics—whether the strictures of religious orthodoxies, the commercial imperatives of business, or the regulatory regimes of state organizations. Yet, to paraphrase Springsteen, such institutions and forces cannot define or control the conversation. The examples I have chosen to cite in this article are droplets from a pool of countless songs that continually cross, consume, and confuse the boundaries between fact and fiction, between the empirical and the imaginative, between documentary and drama, and between reality and its representation.

Notes

Keith Negus, Professor of Musicology, Goldsmiths, University of London, London, UK, entered higher education as a mature student, having spent many years playing keyboards and guitar in a variety of bands. He completed a PhD study of the music industry and subsequently taught at the Universities of Leicester and Puerto Rico before moving to Goldsmiths. His books include *Producing Pop* (1992), *Music Genres and Corporate Cultures* (1999), and *Bob Dylan* (2008). E-mail: k.negus@gold.ac.uk.
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1. For just one example of this neglect, see the conspicuous absence of song and music in H. Porter Abbott, *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

2. For overviews, see Emma Kafalenos, "Overview of the Music and Narrative Field," in *Narrative across Media: The Languages of Storytelling*, ed. Marie-Laure Ryan (London: Routledge, 2004), 275–82; and Fred Everett Maus "Narratology, Narrativity," Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40607. For an influential approach that seeks to extend or overcome the perceived limitations of formal analytical approaches without moving away from a focus on the text, see Carolyn Abbate, *Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991). For a critique of a narrative approach to Western art music, see Jean-Jacques Nattiez, "Can One Speak of Narrativity in Music?" *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 115, no. 2 (1990): 240–57, trans. Katharine Ellis. For a further intervention and contextualization of the above, see Fred Everett Maus, "Classical Instrumental Music and Narrative," in *A Companion to Narrative Theory*, ed. James Phelan and Peter J. Rabinowitz (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 466–83.

3. Most notable and influential here is Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies, Narrative Film Music* (London: BFI, 1988).

4. The application of literary criticism has been notable in approaches to the lyrics of Bob Dylan. See, for example, Aidan Day, *Jokerman: Reading the Lyrics of Bob Dylan* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988); and Christopher Ricks, *Dylan's Visions of Sin* (London: Viking, 2003).

5. It is striking how little sustained scholarly attention has been devoted to the song as a form of storytelling. Notable exceptions to this neglect include Simon Frith's brief mention of narrative in his argument about the importance of treating songs and their reception as performances in *Performing Rites: On the Value of Popular Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); Jocelyn Neal's study of country music songwriting since the 1980s, "Narrative Paradigms, Musical Signifiers, and Form as Function in Country Music," *Music Theory Spectrum* 29, no. 1 (2007): 41–72; Serge Lacasse's equally focused and detailed case study of Eminem, "Phonographic Narrative Strategies in Eminem's 'Stan'" (2007), http://www.charm.rhul.ac.uk/content/events/s4Lacasse.text.pdf; Robynn Stilwell's study of the use of Phil Collins's "In the Air Tonight" in television and film narratives, "'In the Air Tonight': Text, Intertextuality and the Construction of Meaning," *Popular Music and Society* 19, no. 4 (1995): 67–103.

6. David Nicholls, "Narrative Theory as an Analytical Tool in the Study of Popular Music Texts," *Music & Letters* 88, no. 2 (2007): 297–315.

7. Nicholls, "Narrative Theory as an Analytical Tool," 301.

8. Nicholls, "Narrative Theory as an Analytical Tool," 302. Space does not permit an extended engagement with this specific track, but it strikes me that this characteristic quality—an "unvarying melody"—may actually *contribute* to the narrative tension by offering a moment that appears to be suspended or caught in the present: the ennui of that sensation of "don't you want me?"

9. Nicholls, "Narrative Theory as an Analytical Tool," 303.

10. Nicholls, "Narrative Theory as an Analytical Tool," 303.

11. Nicholls, "Narrative Theory as an Analytical Tool," 301.

12. Various aspects of progressive rock are debated in Kevin Holm-Hudson, ed., *Progressive Rock Reconsidered* (London: Routledge, 2001).

13. Lawrence Kramer, "Musical Narratology: A Theoretical Outline," *Indiana Theory Review* 12 (1991): 141–62, at 162.

14. The use of existing songs as inspiration or models for "new" songs is an issue that frequently crops up in Paul Zollo's collection of interviews, *Songwriters on Songwriting*, 4th ed. (New York: Da Capo, 2003).

15. Nicholls, "Narrative Theory as an Analytical Tool," 301.

16. Barbara Bradby, "'She Told Me What to Say': The Beatles and Girl-Group Discourse," *Popular Music and Society* 28, no. 3 (2005): 359–90, at 360. Emphasis in original.

17. Bradby, "She Told Me What to Say," 373.

18. Bradby, "She Told Me What to Say," 377.

19. Fred Everett Maus, "Music as Drama," *Music Theory Spectrum* 10, no. 1 (1988): 56–73, 65–66.

20. Maus "Narratology, Narrativity," 2.

21. Maus, "Music as Drama," 73.

22. Walter Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians: The Quarry Men through Rubber Soul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 200–1.

23. Dominic Pedler, *The Songwriting Secrets of the Beatles* (New York and London: Omnibus Press, 2003), 110–12.

24. Ian MacDonald, *Revolution in the Head: The Beatles' Records and the Sixties* (London: Fourth Estate, 1994), 76.

25. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians*, 202.

26. Cited in MacDonald, *Revolution in the Head*, 78. See also Howard Sounes, *Down the Highway: The Life of Bob Dylan* (London: Black Swan, 2001), 198.

27. For further discussion of this point, see various sections of Wilfrid Mellers, *Twilight of the Gods: The Beatles in Retrospect* (London: Faber and Faber, 1973); and Keith Negus, *Bob Dylan* (London: Equinox, 2008), 75.

28. Nicholls, "Narrative Theory as an Analytical Tool," 297.

29. See, for example, Tom Perchard, *Lee Morgan: His Life, Music and Culture* (London: Equinox, 2006).

30. Eric F. Clarke, "Subject-Position and the Specification of Invariants in Music by Frank Zappa and P. J. Harvey," *Music Analysis* 18, no. 3 (1999): 347–74. Clarke draws from its use in the study of film. It is debatable whether the political imperatives that informed the development of the concept in Marxism were retained in film studies. The link to ideological critique and political praxis has almost disappeared on its journey into music analysis.

31. Clarke, "Subject-Position and the Specification of Invariants," 354.

32. Clarke, "Subject-Position and the Specification of Invariants," 371.

33. Nicola Dibben, "Pulp, Pornography and Spectatorship: Subject Matter and Subject Position in Pulp's *This Is Hardcore*," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 126, no. 1 (2001): 83–106.

34. Tia DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

35. Eric F. Clarke, *Ways of Listening: An Ecological Approach to the Perception of Musical Meaning* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 124.

36. Tia DeNora, *After Adorno: Rethinking Music Sociology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 63, 73, 112.

37. DeNora, *After Adorno*, 92.

38. DeNora, *After Adorno*, 154.

39. Chris Kennett, "Is Anybody Listening?" in *Analyzing Popular Music*, ed. A. Moore (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 207–8.

40. Chris Kennett, "A Tribe Called Chris: Pop Music Analysis as Idioethnomusicology," *Open Space Magazine* 10 (2008): 8–19, 13.

41. Kennett, "Is Anybody Listening?."

42. Kennett, "A Tribe Called Chris," 17.

43. Kennett, "A Tribe Called Chris," 17.

44. "Empathy" being a key concept in Edmund Husserl's development of the notion of "intersubjectivity."

45. A similar idea to this notion of shared understanding is being explored and developed by Nick Reyland through his "listener-response theory" in "Listening for the Plot: Towards a Reader-Response Theory of Musical Narrativity," Lancaster Institute for Contemporary Arts Research Seminar, 8 June 2010.

46. Kennett, "A Tribe Called Chris," 17.

47. See Ian Maxwell "The Curse of Fandom: Insiders, Outsiders and Ethnography," in *Popular Music Studies*, ed. David Hesmondhalgh and Keith Negus (London: Arnold, 2002), 103–16. See also Simon Frith, *Performing Rites: On the Value of Popular Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

48. Abbott, *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*, 66.

49. William Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity: A Study of Its Effects in English Verse* (1930; London: Chatto & Windus, 1953), 1, x.

50. Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, 3.

51. Umberto Eco, *The Limits of Interpretation* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990), 6.

52. See, for example, The Archive of Misheard Lyrics, http://www.kissthisguy.com.

53. See Umberto Eco, Richard Rorty, Jonathan Culler, and Christine Brooke-Rose, *Interpretation and Overinterpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

54. See Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, vols. 1–3, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984–88); Paul Ricoeur

"Narrated Time" (1984), in Mario J. Valdés, *A Ricoeur Reader: Reflection and Imagination* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991). See also Richard Kearney, "Narrative Imagination: Between Ethics and Poetics," in *Paul Ricoeur: The Hermeneutics of Action*, ed. Richard Kearney (London: Sage, 1996).

55. Mara Rainwater, "Refiguring Ricoeur: Narrative Force and Communicative Ethics," in Kearney, *Paul Ricoeur: The Hermeneutics of Action*, 107.

56. David Rasmussen, "Rethinking Subjectivity: Narrative Identity and the Self," in Kearney, *Paul Ricoeur: The Hermeneutics of Action*, 160.

57. Paul Ricoeur, "Can Fictional Narratives Be True?" *Analecta Husserliana* 14 (1983): 3–19, esp. 4, 14, 3.

58. Nick Crossley, *Intersubjectivity: The Fabric of Social Becoming* (London: Sage, 1996), 173–74.

59. David Bloome, Marlene Beierle, Margaret Grigorenko, and Susan Goldman, "Learning over Time: Uses of Intercontextuality, Collective Memories, and Classroom Chronotopes in the Construction of Learning Opportunities in a Ninth-Grade Language Arts Classroom," *Language and Education* 23, no. 4 (2009): 313–34, at 314.

60. Those unfamiliar with this song can readily access the lyrics at http://www.steelydan.com/lyrroyalscam.html#track1.

61. Walter Everett, "A Royal Scam: The Abstruse and Ironic Bop-Rock Harmony of Steely Dan," *Music Theory Spectrum* 26 (2004): 201–35, at 201.

62. Cited in Bruce Pollock and John Stix, "Introduction," in *Steely Dan Complete* (Miami: Universal Music Publishing/Warner Bros., 1995), 2. See also Ben Williams, "Influences: Donald Fagen," *New York Magazine*, 19 March 2006, http://nymag.com/arts/popmusic/profiles/16453/.

63. For an extended discussion of this point, see Don Breithaupt, *Aja* (New York: Continuum, 2007).

64. Jocelyn Neal highlights the structural principles of songwriting in country music: repeated choruses in which the lyrical text does not change and "must continue to be relevant after the song's plot has progressed through additional verses." "Narrative Paradigms, Musical Signifiers, and Form as Function in Country Music," 45.

65. Max Bell, "Steely Dan," *New Musical Express*, originally published 13 August 1977, available at http://www.rocksbackpages.com, article ID 11904.

66. John Markert, "Sing a Song of Drug Use-Abuse: Four Decades of Drug Lyrics in Popular Music—From the Sixties through the Nineties," *Sociological Inquiry* 71, no. 2 (2001): 194–220.

67. Becker's and Fagen's songs use harmonies and voicing, and transitions to chords and keys that would be unexpected in conventional rock sequences. This may destabilize or broaden the tone, inflecting lyrics with an ominous or disconcerting mood. For further discussion, see Everett, "A Royal Scam: The Abstruse and Ironic Bop-Rock Harmony of Steely Dan"; and Breithaupt, *Aja*.

68. For an insight into fan discussions about the meaning of songs, and the way conflicting interpretations are debated and resolved, see, for example, http://www.songmeanings.net and http://www.songfacts.com.

69. Robert J. Toth "A World of My Own," March 2000, http://www.steelydan.com/toth.html.

70. Paul Clements has written of his own enthusiasm for Steely Dan's "outsider hip" and "cult" status: "In my own case of adolescence in a small town in England, this music alongside a range of other less mainstream popular music forms represented creative aspiration (especially a career as a jazz or rock musician). . . . Steely Dan . . . represented a complex and sophisticated popular music championed in the main by a predominantly male grouping which identified with the jazz/beat lifestyle." See "Cultural Legitimacy or 'Outsider Hip'?: Representational Ambiguity and the Significance of Steely Dan," *Leisure Studies* 28, no. 2 (2009): 189–206, at 196.

71. Toth, "A World of My Own."

72. Sheila Whitely, *The Space between the Notes: Rock and the Counter-Culture* (London: Routledge, 1992).

73. Jay Stevens, *Storming Heaven, LSD and the American Dream* (New York: Grove Press, 1987), 311.

74. Stevens, *Storming Heaven*, 313.

75. Martin A. Lee and Bruce Shlain, *Acid Dreams: The Complete Social History of LSD: The CIA, the Sixties and Beyond* (New York: Grove Press, 1992), 146.

76. Christopher Gair, *The American Counterculture* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 134.

77. Keith Cameron, "Leader of the Pack," *Mojo* 201 (August 2010): 76–86, 84.

How Moral Is Fidelio? *Didacticism in the Finales of Beethoven's* Leonore *Operas*

Martin Nedbal

In his letters to the librettist Friedrich Treitschke from 1814, Ludwig van Beethoven uses two distinct metaphors when he refers to Treitschke's revision of the libretto for what was to become *Fidelio*, the final version of Beethoven's only completed opera. In one of these letters, Beethoven claims that Treitschke's revision filled him with the resolution to "rebuild the desolate ruins of an old castle."[1] In another letter from the same period (most likely written later than the previous one, though both letters are undated), Beethoven claims that Treitschke "salvaged a few good bits of a ship that was wrecked and stranded."[2] A desolate castle and a wrecked ship here stand in for the earlier versions of the opera, nowadays titled *Leonore*, completed and performed in 1805 and 1806, with a libretto created originally by Joseph von Sonnleithner from an earlier Parisian work by Jean-Pierre Bouilly, and revised in 1806 by Stephan von Breuning.[3] Beethoven's metaphors betray a touch of ambiguity within his attitude toward these two earlier versions. Whereas the image of a desolate castle gives the impression of past glory, the vision of a shipwreck carries the connotation of a catastrophe caused by human failure or a natural disaster. Beethoven's perception of the earlier *Leonore* operas thus seems to have oscillated between feelings of pride and admiration and a sense of bitterness, dissatisfaction, and misgiving.[4]

Beethoven's own uncertainty about his opera has prompted numerous scholars and critics throughout the past two centuries to argue vigorously about the relative merits of its three distinct versions. During the nineteenth century, the heated debate had already produced a tendency to perceive *Leonore* and *Fidelio* as antipodes. In the preface to his 1851 edition of the 1806 *Leonore*, Otto Jahn, the first scholar who attempted

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to reconstruct the earlier versions of the opera, voiced strong preference for the 1805 *Leonore*.[5] Subsequent editors of the 1805 opera embraced Jahn's opinions, promoting the paradigm of a desolate fortress in need of purifying reconstruction. In his *Fidelio-Buch*, a detailed study of the three versions, Willy Hess, for example, employs Lorenzian analysis to demonstrate the superiority of the *Ur-Leonore* to the subsequent two operas.[6]

Later generations of scholars stressed the qualities of the 1806 and 1814 operas in order to refute the views of the pro-*Ur-Leonore* camp. The desire to legitimize the later two versions marks especially the work of Helga Lühning, who claims that Beethoven's transformation of the 1805 opera in 1806 set the stage for the 1814 revision, that both revisions reflected Beethoven's artistic desires as well as his dissatisfaction with the 1805 work, and that these revisions should be considered an improvement.[7]

A more subtle endorsement of the 1814 version lurks behind the statements of those scholars who see the later opera as *unique* thanks to its stress on didacticism. In his classic essay on Beethoven's encounters with opera, Winton Dean asserts, for example, that in the 1805 libretto "the moral is not emphasized, but allowed to emerge through the action, [and only] Treitschke and Beethoven raise it from the particular to the universal and ram it home."[8] Taking a cue from Dean, Paul Robinson claims that in 1805, "the focus is on individual characters, while in 1814 it shifts to collectivity," and that the 1814 version "alone boasts the distinctive moral pathos that separates *Fidelio* from all other works for the lyric theater."[9] Jens Brincker makes his preference for the purportedly greater moralistic bent of the 1814 version more explicit when he closes his comparison of the 1805 and 1814 operas with a pointed play on words:

> *Fidelio* became an idea-drama, whereas *Leonore* is a drama of people and situations. And generations of opera-lovers have, therefore, reacted, as does Marzelline in the opera's first act, with a "Fidelio [i.e., the version titled *Fidelio*] hab ich gewählet [I have chosen]."[10]

In the view of Dean, Robinson, Brincker, and many others, *Fidelio* represents the ultimate Beethovenian opera because it high-mindedly removes itself from the earlier versions' interest in portraying a mundane world of ordinary people and their emotional reactions to the occurrences around them—the storm-resistant, magnificent vessel of *Fidelio* is thought to overshadow the wrecks of the earlier *Leonores*, which broke on the rocks or were never seaworthy to begin with.

In this article, I seek to overcome such dichotomous views of the aesthetic and ideological underpinnings of the *Fidelio/Leonore* operas. Instead, I take at face value the ambiguity of the composer's attitudes toward the earlier versions. Most of my points rest on the belief that the relative merits of the individual versions will always remain unstable and adjustable.[11] To bring new perspectives into the confounding relationship among the three, I examine and contextualize one particular aspect of the work that nearly all commentators have discussed, though often too briefly and always without sufficient nuance. All three versions of the opera are infused with what Robinson refers to as "moral pathos," a tendency to "ram home" moral messages through intense textual and musical means, and it is this didactic predilection and its cultural and political significance during the period of the opera's circuitous gestation that this article illuminates.

Beethoven's inclination to use stage spectacle as a tool of moral edification becomes particularly prominent in the finale to what is act 2 in 1806 and 1814, and act 3 in 1805. Whereas it is common for opera finales of the time to feature moments of emotional reflection in which the characters express their personal reactions to the ongoing drama, Beethoven's finales constantly interrupt the flow of the drama with didactic rather than expressive outpouring.[12] My exploration of "moral pathos" will therefore focus mainly on this concluding part of the opera. As noted above, certain scholars and critics see the 1814 (final) version in particular as engaging most intensely with didacticism. And indeed, the 1814 finale does not have much dramatic momentum. Unlike in the earlier versions, in 1814, Leonore's attempt to liberate Florestan from the murderous intentions of Pizarro, the main predicament of the opera's plot, has been successfully accomplished in the previous scene. Instead, the finale presents several extensive moments of reflection, which draw moral lessons out of preceding occurrences.[13] Yet, edifying announcements are presented in the previous versions of the finale as well. The following pages compare the most explicitly didactic sections of the 1814 finale to corresponding portions of the earlier versions. My examination uncovers striking differences in how the three versions deal with didacticism, differences that I interpret as reflecting Beethoven's changing attitudes to social functions of theater as well as the composer's reactions to specific political circumstances surrounding the three works. I argue, moreover, that these different approaches closely parallel specific strands of discourse on theater as a moral institution in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Religious versus Secular Moralizing in the Finale's Opening Moments

In its 1814 incarnation, the *Fidelio* finale starts with a celebratory chorus:

Heil sei dem Tag, heil sei der Stunde!	Hail the day, hail the hour!
Lang ersehnt, doch unvermeint,	Long yearned for but unforeseen,
Gerechtigkeit mit Huld im Bunde,	justice together with mercy
vor unseres Grabes Thor erscheint.	appears at the gate of our grave!

The text here expresses collective joy, while also celebrating justice and mercy, the two types of benevolent attitudes exemplified in both the preceding scenes of the opera and the following sections of the finale. Significantly, only the attitudes, not their bearers—for example, Don Fernando or Leonore—are mentioned in the text, which establishes an atmosphere of nondramatic abstractness and contributes to the impersonal, idealistic tinge of the finale's opening—qualities that perhaps also fit the "heroic" label.

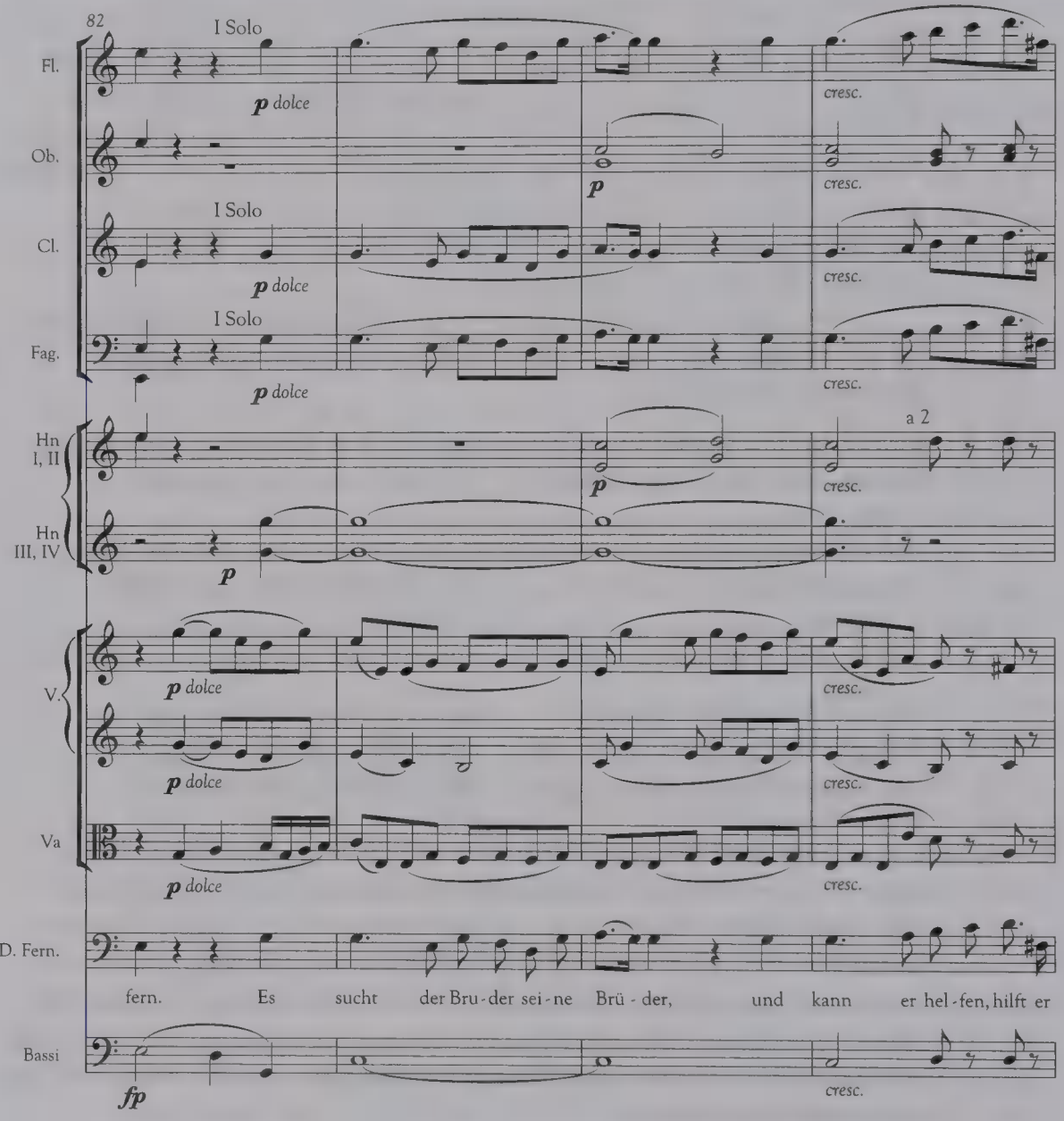
The collectivist spirit continues to dominate the ensuing section, in which Don Fernando arrives and addresses the mass of people assembled on the stage:

Des besten Königs Wink und Wille	The will and desire of our goodly king
führt mich zu euch, ihr Armen,	leads me to you, poor people,
her,	
daß ich der Frevel Macht enthülle,	so that I may expose powerful crime,
die all'umfangen, schwarz und	that, black and heavy, surrounds
schwer.	everything.
Nein, nicht länger kniet sklavisch	No, no longer shall you kneel down like
nieder,	slaves,
Tyrannenstrenge sei mir fern.	stern tyranny be far from me!
Es sucht der Bruder seine Brüder,	**A brother seeks his brothers,**
und kann er helfen, hilft er gern.	**and gladly helps, if he can.**

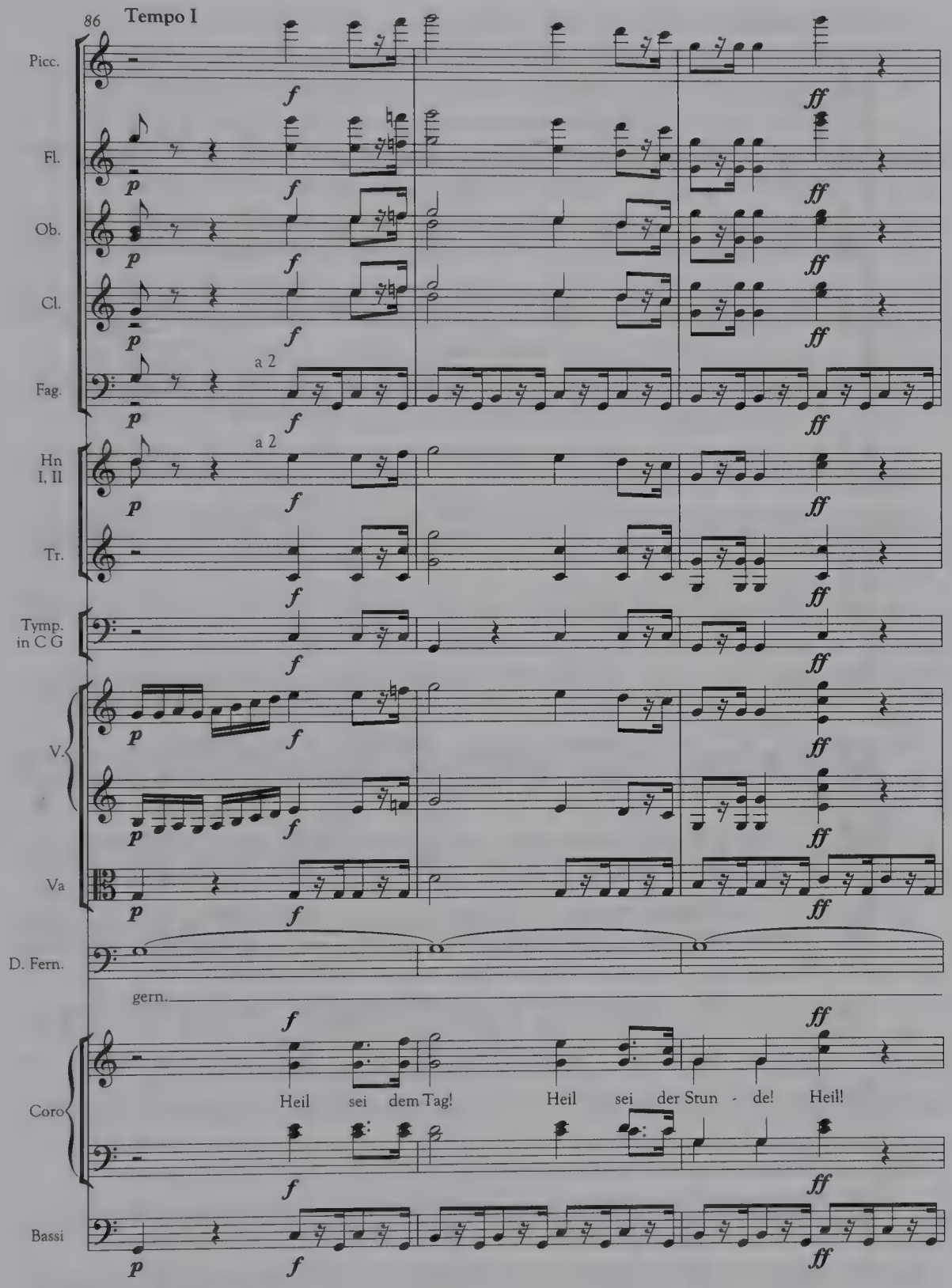
Once again, Fernando does not mention any particular person from the previous plot, imbuing his introductory words with an aura of universal validity. In the final couplet, moreover, the level of abstractness intensifies, as Fernando draws a generalized principle, a maxim of sorts, to point out the moral implications of the situation at hand: like him, who comes to the prison to enforce justice and exercise mercy, all people should strive to treat their fellow humans in a just, brotherly, and compassionate manner.

Beethoven brings out the abstractness of Fernando's concluding couplet by employing a special set of emphasizing musical features.

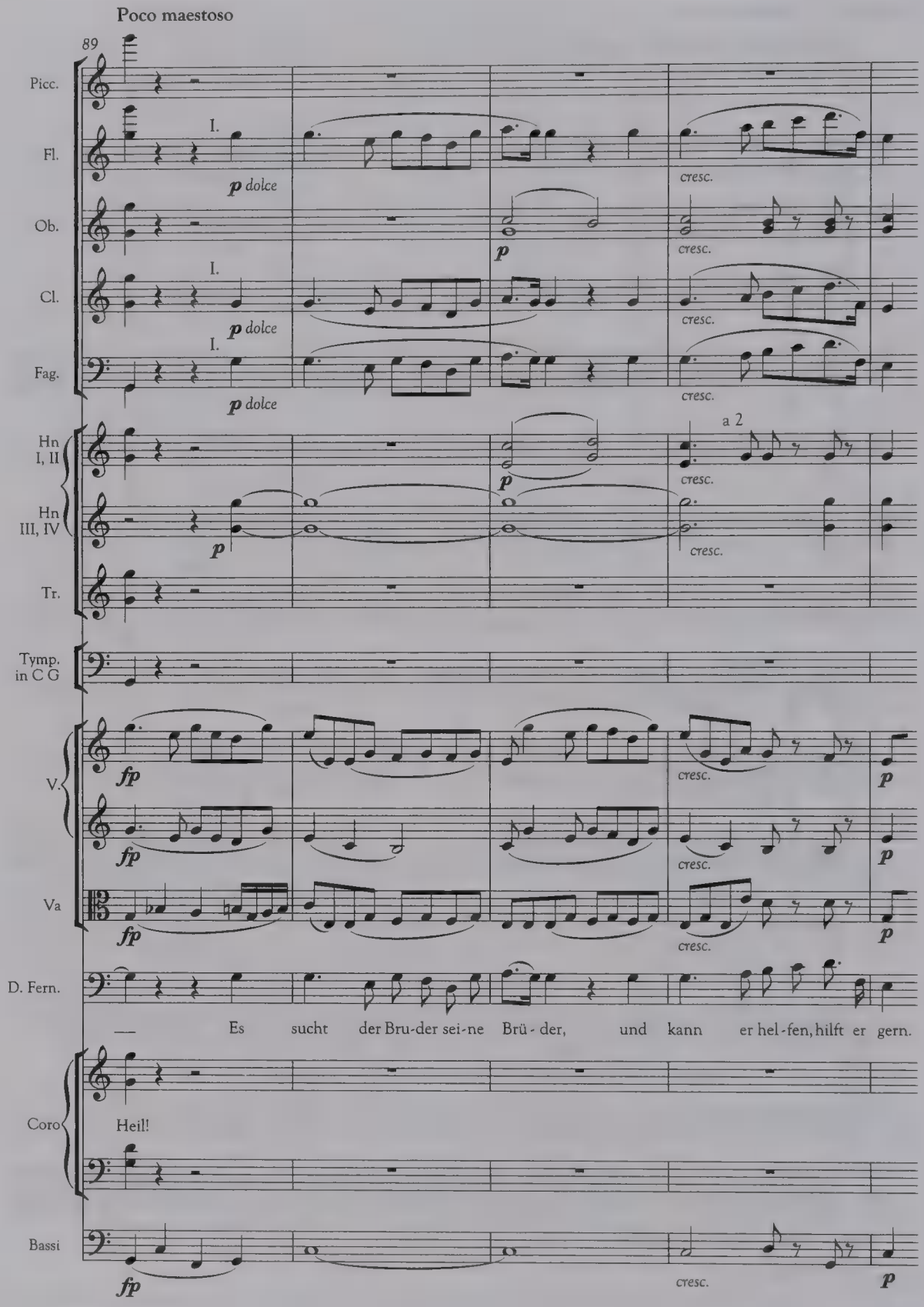
Unlike the first six lines of his speech, Fernando's homily is stated twice (ex. 1, mm. 82–93)—the repetition aptly stressing the statement's rhetorical importance. Fernando, moreover, sings the first six lines in a recitative, but he suddenly shifts into an arioso at the onset of the generalized statement. A change of dynamics (*forte* to *piano* and *dolce*) further increases the impression of a rupture in the musical flow, which, in turn, sets into relief the shift of narrative mode in the text. Beethoven



Example 1. Beethoven, *Fidelio* (1814), act 2 finale—Don Fernando's brotherly maxim (mm. 82–93). Based on *Fidelio* (Leipzig: C. F. Peters, 1870).



Example 1. Continued



Example 1. Continued

also introduces a new musical topic. The opening celebratory chorus is set as a march, and martial figures appear often in the accompaniment to Fernando's recitative. The final couplet, by contrast, introduces a simple bourrée-like melody in the voice doubled by the clarinet, flute, and bassoon, while the horns and basses play a tonic drone: the musical image of regal pomp and glory suddenly gives way to a portrayal of idyllic Arcadia. Whereas the militaristic idiom of Fernando's recitative matches the royal authority he represents, the pastoral idiom does not fit as easily with his onstage characteristics. It is as if Fernando suddenly spoke with a different voice, one not exactly his own. A possible way of conceptualizing the musical shift in this moment would be to imagine a transcendental narrator taking hold of Fernando and turning him into a medium through which the edifying principle behind Fernando's speech can be revealed.[14]

The coupling of Fernando's didactic digression with musical representation often associated with the idyllic world of shepherds and shepherdesses might seem unusual at first. Such coupling, however, appears quite frequently in works by late eighteenth-century Viennese composers, most notably Mozart. As Wye Allanbrook and Michael Beckerman have shown, Mozart often associates pastoral styles with utopian moralistic visions in his Italian operas.[15] Even more important, Mozart also employs pastoral idioms in the maxim moments of his singspiels, most notably in the final maxim of the act 3 finale in his *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* or in several maxims in *Die Zauberflöte*.[16] Beethoven himself explored this connection previously in the finale of his "Pastoral" Symphony, especially in the last movement, which, as Richard Will has shown, combines pastoral and religious musical styles and thus resonates with tales of moral redemption.[17] The pastoral qualities of Beethoven's music during Fernando's moralistic proclamation therefore further increase the transcendental tinge of the moment and detach it from the remainder of the scene.

The otherworldly aura established at the outset of the maxim disappears when the choral fanfare ("Heil sei dem Tag . . .") briefly returns following the initial statement of Fernando's maxim (mm. 86–89). The fanfare accentuates, on the one hand, the repetition of Fernando's pastoral exhortation—as if Beethoven wanted to make sure that the audience remained alert and listened attentively to the maxim the second time around. On the other hand, the fanfare makes the listeners aware of the existence of other voices besides the moralistic narrator—that is, the chorus that represents the onstage reality.[18] As a result, during the repeated statement of the maxim, the singer no longer seems to impersonate a sublime moralist, but appears to have returned to his role of

Fernando. Beethoven has the transcendental voice proclaim its didactic revelation, but then allows the onstage character to repeat it as if trying to ensure that both the onstage characters and the audience take note of it.

Beethoven thus astutely avoided a trap inadvertently set by Treitschke's libretto. In Treitschke's text, Rocco responds to Fernando's call for brotherly help: "Wohlan, so helfet! Helft den Armen!" (Well, then help! Help the poor [Leonore and Florestan]!). Rocco's response makes the listeners aware that the onstage characters can hear Fernando's maxim, and thus it diminishes the maxim's transcendental effect. And indeed, without Beethoven's musical setting, the phrase would most probably appear as a decorative turn of phrase, a mere rhetorical climax that effectively concludes a politician's speech but that most probably strikes the politician's audience as a common platitude. By having the maxim announced twice in a row with the intervening choral exclamation and by setting it in an ethereal musical style, Beethoven made it possible for the first statement of the maxim to function as an unearthly revelation. At the same time, by creating an impression that the singer associated with Fernando utters the second maxim statement in his onstage persona, Beethoven allowed the maxim to advance the plot of the finale.

The collective euphoria and Fernando's rallying exhortations contrast with the gloomy opening of the 1805 and 1806 finales. Here the drama of Leonore and Florestan has not been resolved yet, at least not in the minds of the main couple. In 1814, the jailor Rocco gives a supportive sign to Leonore and Florestan as he leaves with the villain Pizarro after the dramatic dungeon quartet, and the couple thus know that they will be saved. In the 1805 and 1806 finales, by contrast, Rocco wrestles away from Leonore the gun that has helped her prevent Pizarro from murdering Florestan. Rocco's action throws the couple into despair, since now they think that the jailor has betrayed them. At the beginning of the *Leonore* finales, then, Leonore and Florestan continue to fear for their lives, and this prolongation of the main plot line melds the finale with the preceding drama. Because of their dramaturgical setup, the earlier finales initially appear to be more dramatic than the 1814 revision.

Even in 1805 and 1806, however, the dramatic flow frequently gives way to impersonal, collective announcements through which edifying observations are drawn out of onstage occurrences.[19] In the opening measures, Beethoven and Sonnleithner give us a hint that the concluding number of the opera will not only present thrilling action but also

didactic reflection (for the whole text, see Table 1).[20] At first, the chorus approaches the dungeon in which Florestan and Leonore are incarcerated and sings about the need to take revenge on Pizarro. Leonore and Florestan hear the vengeance cries, and since they believe that Rocco has betrayed them, deduce that these cries announce Pizarro's victory. Even in what they think to be their last minutes, however, the lovers do not lose their sense of righteousness. After Leonore's initial sigh of desperation, "O Gott! Nun ists um uns geschehen!" (Oh God! Now we are done for!), Florestan decides to accept death fearlessly and thus sets an example of controlling one's passions:

Laß uns mit Muth dem Tod,	Let us meet death,
der Ruh' entgegen gehn.	the [eternal] calmness with courage.

Beethoven pays special attention to this exemplary statement in that he sets it in E-flat major and thus for the first time departs from the initial C minor within the finale.[21]

In the following segment, didacticism becomes even more explicit, as the chorus, still behind the scenes, sings:

Zur Rache, zur Rache!	Revenge, revenge!
Die Unschuld wird befreyt,	**Innocence is [always] liberated,**
Gott schützet die gerechte Sache,	**God upholds the righteous cause**
und straft die Grausamkeit.	**and punishes brutality.**

The final tercet presents a generalized religious reflection; the chorus announces to the audience what they are supposed to infer from the plot and retain in memory: God's providence protects the innocent and punishes the evil. Leonore and Florestan participate in the catechism in that they repeat the tercet's last two lines.

The content of this didactic proclamation clashes with the couple's utterances in the next section:

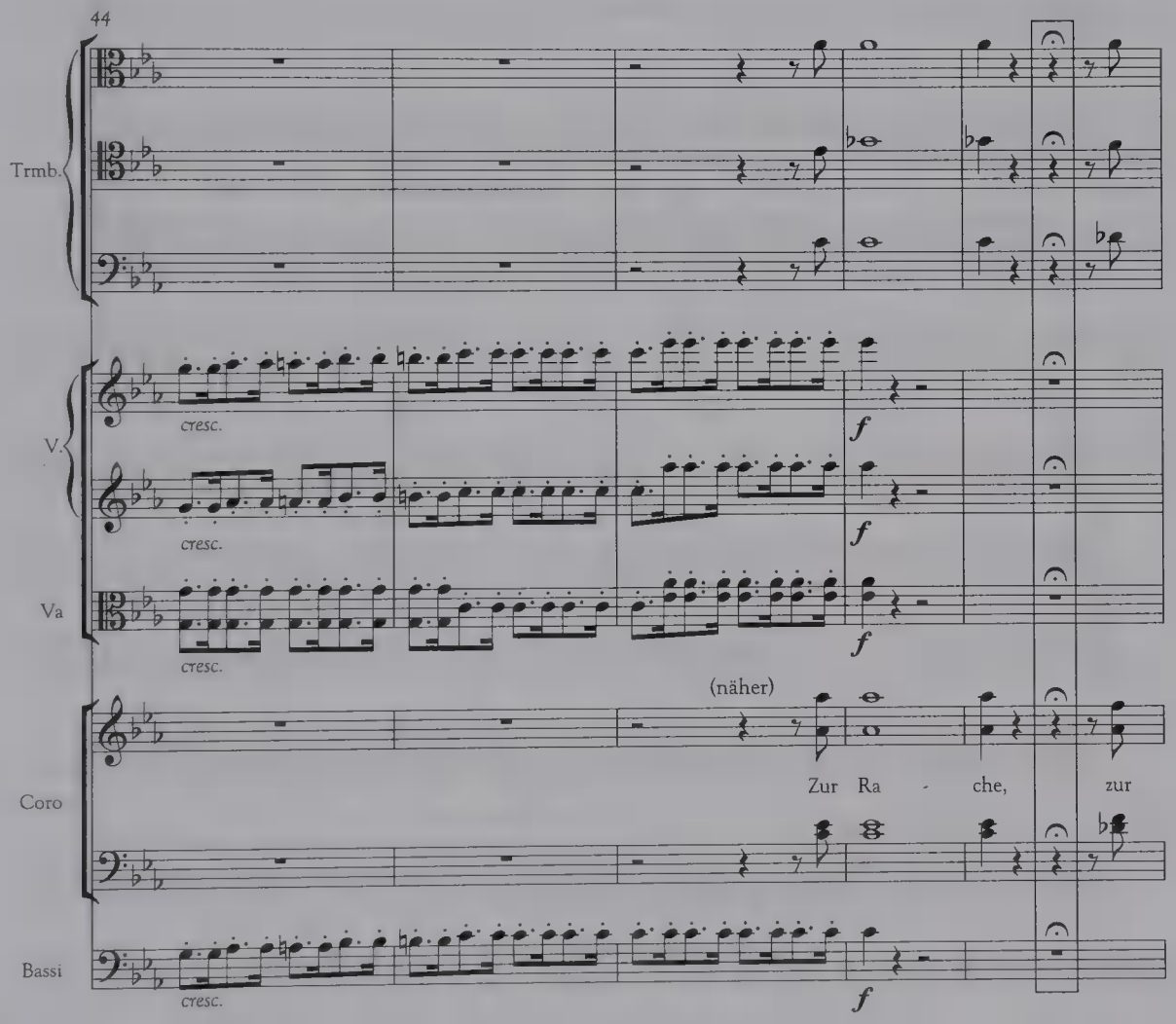
FLORESTAN:	
Wer reisst sie mir aus meinen Armen?	Who will pull her from my arms?
LEONORE:	
Herbei, ich trotze der Gefahr!	Hither, I defy the danger![22]

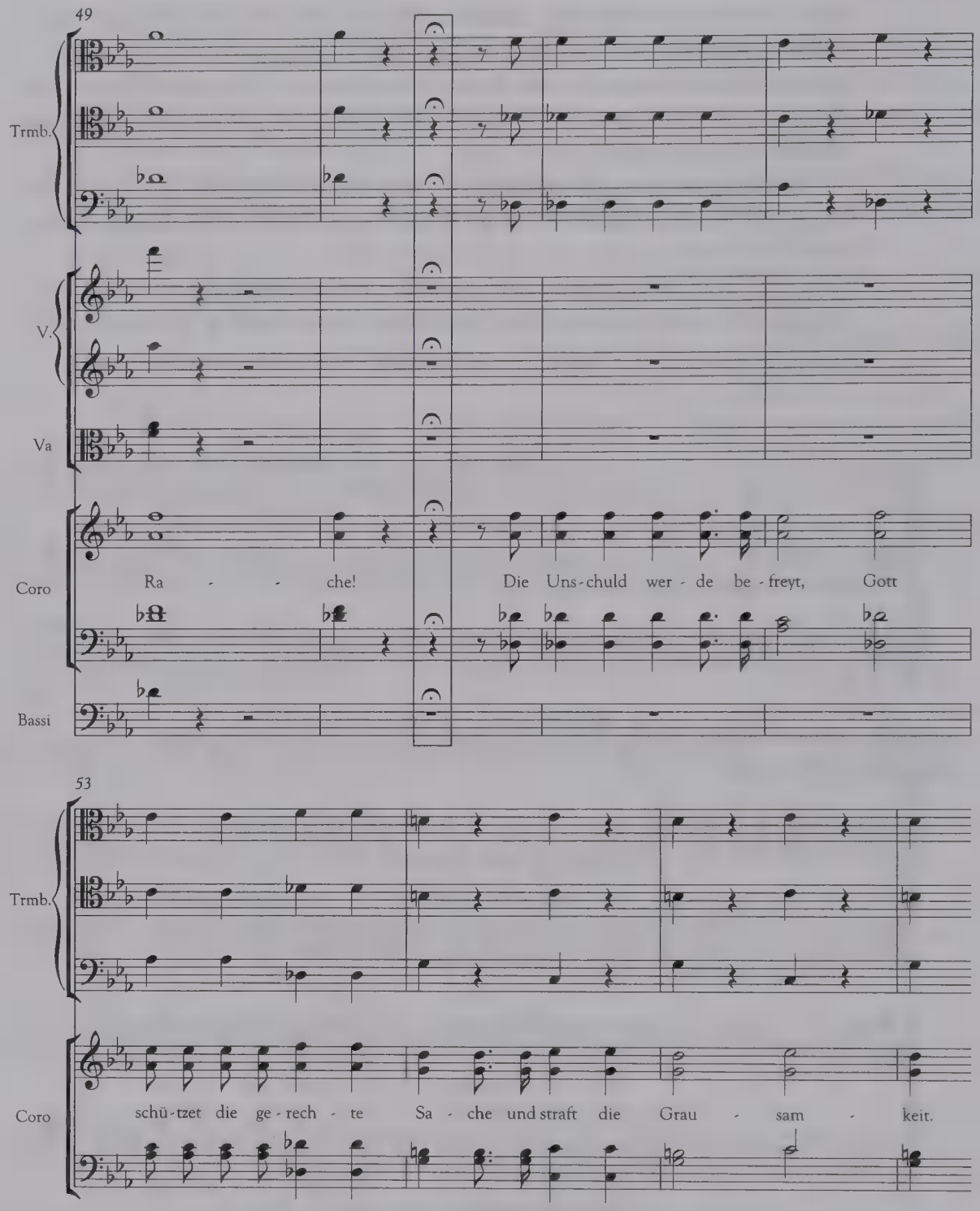
Leonore and Florestan retain the belief that they have been betrayed and that they are going to die, although they have just listened to and repeated the choral announcement promising liberation. The discrepancy between what Leonore and Florestan appear to know about their situation when they sing these despairing lines and the hopeful message of the preceding generalized statement suggests that a narrative rupture occurs in the drama at this moment, a rupture similar to that

Table 1. The opening sections of the act 2 (3) finales in *Leonore/Fidelio*

1805	1806	1814
CHOR (*von innen, etwas entfernt*): Zur Rache! Zur Rache! Wir müssen ihn sehn!	CHOR (*von innen, sehr entfernt*): Zur Rache! Zur Rache! Wir müssen ihn sehen!	CHOR DES VOLKES UND DER GEFANGENEN: Heil sei dem Tag, heil sei der Stunde, die lang ersehnt, doch unvermeint, Gerechtigkeit mit Huld im Bunde vor unseres Grabes Tor erscheint.
LEONORE (*mit Kraft*): O Gott! Nun ists um uns geschehn! O Hilfe! Großer Gott!	LEONORE: O Gott! Nun ists um uns geschehen! O Hülfe! Großer Gott!	FERNANDO: Des besten Königs Wink und Wille führt mich zu euch, ihr Armen, her, daß ich der Frevel Macht enthülle, die all' umfangen, schwarz und schwer.
FLORESTAN: Laß uns mit Muth dem Tod, der Ruh' entgegen gehn.	FLORESTAN: Laß uns mit Muth dem Tod, der Ruh' entgegen gehen.	Nein, nicht länger kniet sklavisch nieder, Tyrannenstrenge sei mir fern! **Es sucht der Bruder seine Brüder, und kann er helfen, hilft er gern.**
BEIDE: Ja, gehen wir ihm entgegen, er endet unsern Harm! Dein Wille, Gott, ist Segen! Ich sterb' in seinem/ihrem Arm!	BEIDE: Ja, gehn wir ihm entgegen, er endet unsern Harm! Dein Wille, Gott, ist Segen! Ich sterb' in seinem/ihrem Arm!	
CHOR: Zur Rache, zur Rache! **Die Unschuld werde befreyt, Gott schützet die gerechte Sache, und straft die Grausamkeit.**	CHOR (*näher*): Zur Rache, zur Rache! **Die Unschuld werde befreyt, Gott schützet die gerechte Sache, und straft die Grausamkeit.** (*hervortretend*)	
LEON + FLOR: **Gott schützet die gerechte Sache, und straft die Grausamkeit.**	LEON + FLOR: **Gott schützet die gerechte Sache, und straft die Grausamkeit.**	

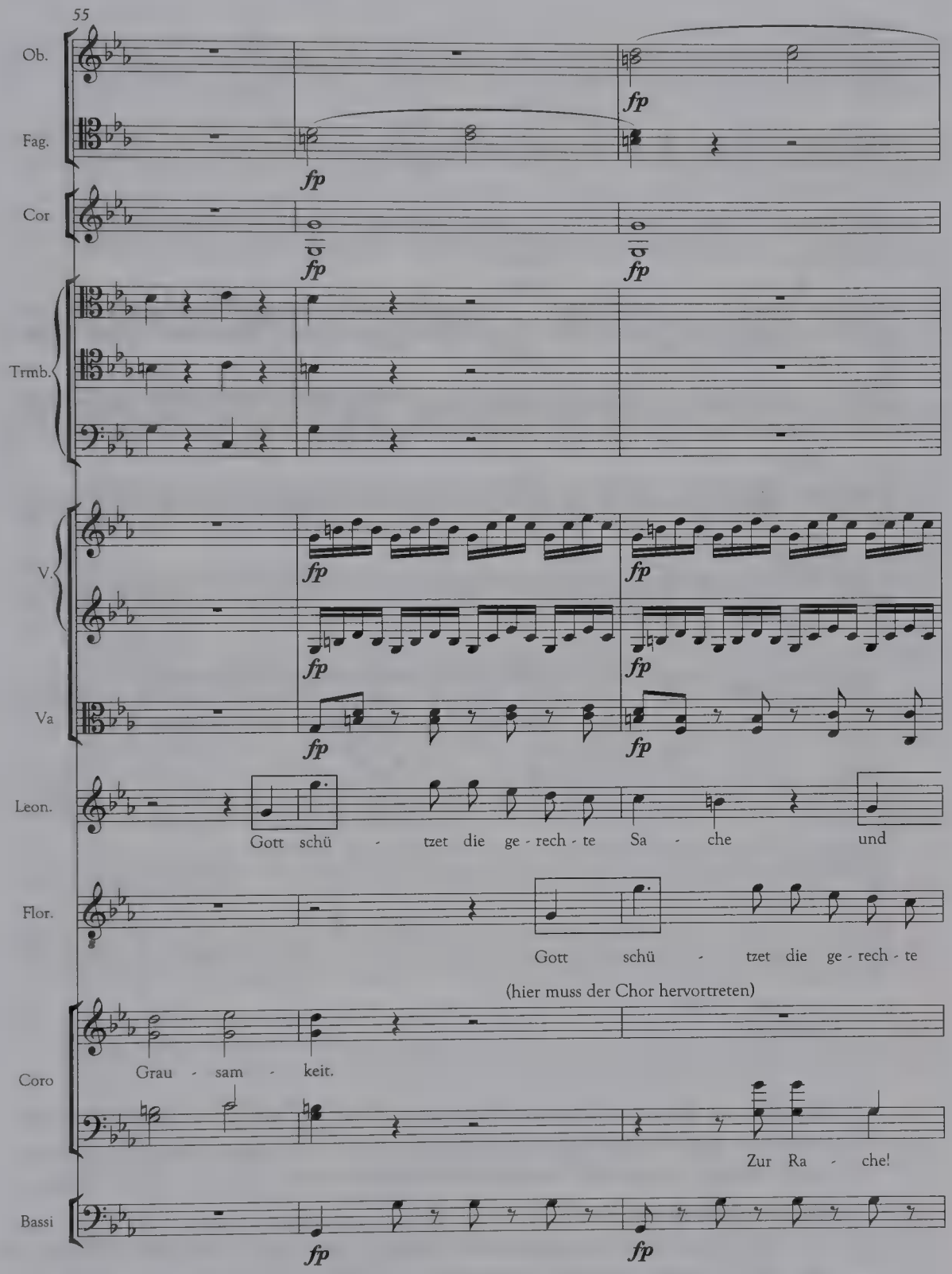
during Fernando's message about brotherhood in the 1814 finale. The rupture divides the scene into two sections characterized by opposing narrative stands—on the one hand the couple and the chorus seem to talk in their own onstage voices; on the other, they represent the voice of a detached commentator.

Beethoven's music supports this notion of narrative rupture in that it approaches the maxim through fermatas and salient harmonic shifts, from the initial C minor to the unrelated key of D-flat major (ex. 2, mm. 44–55).[23] Beethoven also underlines the choral statement of the maxim with ominous sounding trombones, associated in Baroque and classical opera with numinous appearances and announcements. The

Example 2. Beethoven, *Leonore* (1805), act 3 finale—vengeance cries followed by maxim, mm. 44–55. Examples 2–7 are based on the critical edition in *Ludwig van Beethoven: Supplemente zur Gesamtausgabe*, ed. Willy Hess, vol. 11 (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1967). Reproduced with permission.

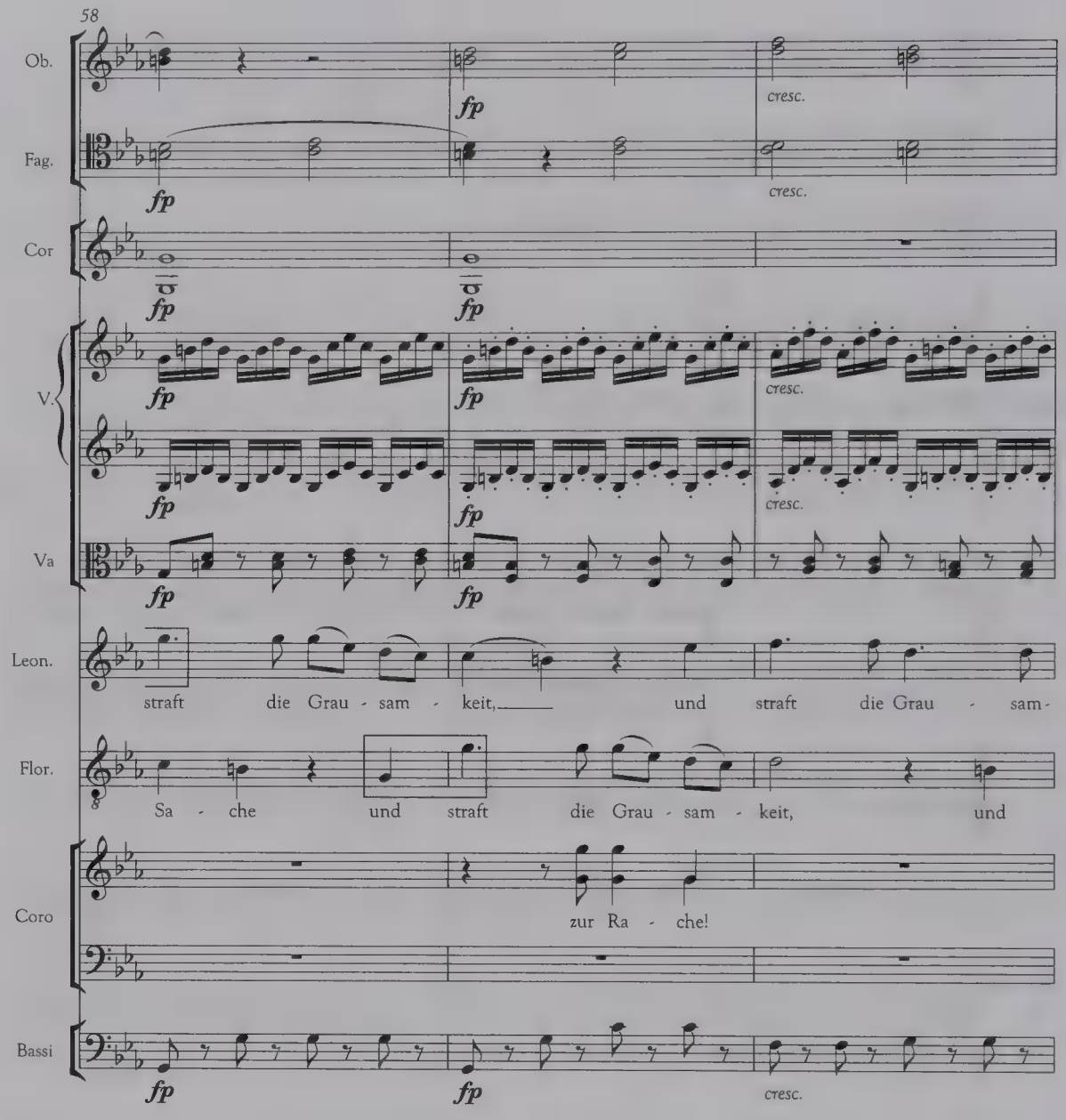


Example 2. Continued

couple's repetition of the maxim (ex. 3, mm. 55–63) abandons the harmonic shifts but makes use of special melodic features. Leonore and Florestan's vocal lines differ from what they have sung in the previous



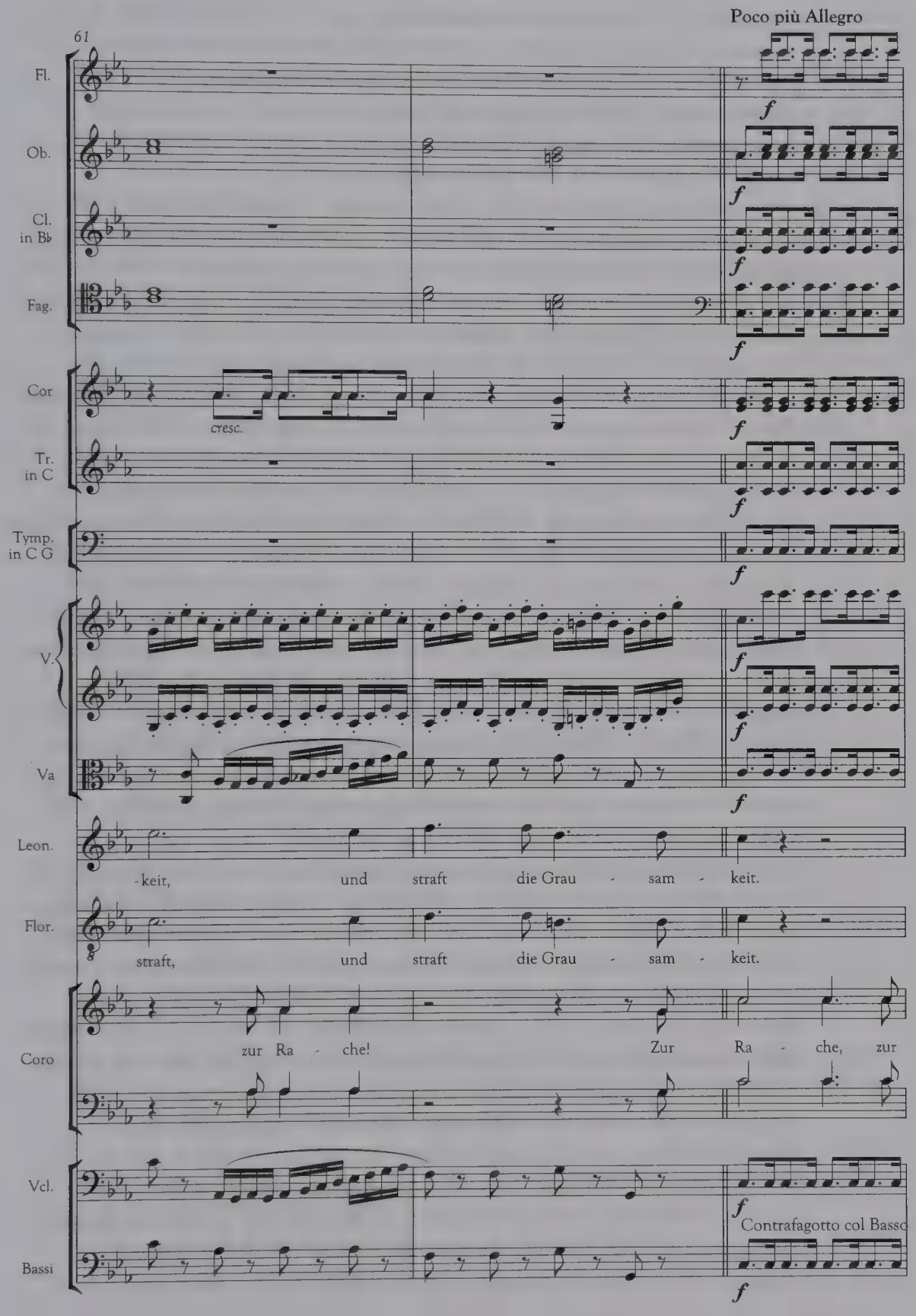
Example 3. Beethoven, *Leonore* (1805), act 3 finale—Leonore and Florestan repeat the choral maxim (mm. 56–63).



Example 3. Continued

section; in the first instance, their melodies had smooth contours with few leaps (and those not exceeding a tritone), whereas here a bold leap of an octave draws the listener's attention to the opening words of the exhortation (mm. 55–57).

Sonnleithner's homilies and Beethoven's musical setting of them in the 1805 *Leonore* parallel Treitschke and Beethoven's stress on didacticism through Fernando's brotherhood maxim in the 1814 finale. In both instances, the onstage reality temporarily gives way to detached



Example 3. Continued

sermonizing. The presence of such elements in the 1805 finale undermines the commonly accepted claims of Dean and others that the 1805 opera focuses mainly on action and personal sentiments. Both the *Leonore* and *Fidelio* finales in fact have a tendency to occasionally deemphasize individualistic elements and thus point to an underlining vision of theater as a moral institution.

The *nature* of the didacticism, though, changed between 1805 and 1814. The homilies in the opening of the 1805 finale have strong religious overtones, whereas the didactic statements of 1814 celebrate the positive outcomes of the decrees by a worldly ruler. A possible reason behind the religious tinge within the didacticism of 1805 crystallizes through a comparison with the Parisian opéra comique *Léonore, ou L'amour conjugal* by the librettist Jean-Nicolas Bouilly and the composer Pierre Gaveaux, used by Sonnleithner as a basis for the 1805 opera. As in Sonnleithner's *Leonore*, the final scene of the French opera opens with a choral vengeance cry, but unlike its German counterpart, the French chorus does not attempt to impart to the audience lessons about divine punishment.[24] Bouilly's Léonore and Florestan do not proclaim any explicit educational messages either; the French hero does not remind Leonore about the need to accept death with courage, nor do the French characters proclaim statements advocating God's righteousness. Instead, they express fear and exult at the prospect of dying together. Musically, Gaveaux sets the scene in a more straightforward manner than Beethoven, without a single moment of musical rupture.[25] Conspicuously, any mention of divinity throughout the opera uses the plural form "dieux" (gods)—reflecting perhaps the anti-Catholic attitudes in France during the French Revolution.[26]

Beethoven and Sonnleithner's intensification of the didactic elements at the end of the opera represents a rather typical Viennese procedure.[27] From the late 1770s on, numerous German operas performed at the various theaters in Vienna were adaptations of French or North-German singspiels, and most of them acquired a strong didactic tinge before they reached the stages of Vienna.[28] This moralizing campaign had multifaceted roots, connected on the one hand with the demands of the strict Viennese censors concerned with public morality and, on the other, with the widespread ideas of Austro-German cultural nationalism, according to which pieces performed for the Germans should have higher standards than non-German works in order to reflect and support the purported moral superiority of the German people. Beethoven and Sonnleithner's intense didacticism thus might have reflected their fear or

endorsement of the censors' demands, but might also have responded to a desire to make the new opera more national.

The religiosity within Beethoven and Sonnleithner's adaptation also seems to reflect a trend associated specifically with Viennese productions of operas from revolutionary France. In her study of early nineteenth-century Viennese translations of Cherubini's *Les Deux Journées*, especially the act 1 arias of Antonio ("Un pauvre petit savoyard") and Mikéli ("Guide mes pas, ô providence!"), Christine Siegert observed that Viennese translators often changed generalized and detached maxim-like passages into personalized statements by the onstage characters and imbued them with religious overtones.[29] Unlike the translators of *Les Deux Journées* (including Georg Friedrich Treitschke, responsible for the translation used at the 1802 production of Cherubini's opera at the Vienna Court Theater), Beethoven and Sonnleithner increased rather than diminished the number of maxims in their adaptation. Yet at the same time, they followed the lines of the other Viennese adaptations of French works, in that they made the opera's maxims overtly religious, possibly to avoid any associations with the revolutionary didacticism in the French original.

The overtly religious aspects of the 1805 libretto thus might have resulted from Beethoven and Sonnleithner's attempts to distance the work from its French roots, and to make it more in line with antirevolutionary attitudes in Catholic Austria. The 1814 opera's emphasis on morality associated with earthly, secular powers, by contrast, may have reflected the transformed political situation after the defeats of the French revolutionary armies. As Lewis Lockwood pointed out, "The *Fidelio* of 1814 is now generally regarded as a glorification of contemporary political authority at a time when the balance of power was palpably shifting toward the restoration of the monarchies."[30] Don Fernando's brotherly maxim and the exclamations and speeches that surround it might therefore be understood as representing an instance of what Nicholas Mathew has called "Handelian sublime"—moments in which music and text within Beethoven's Vienna Congress pieces function as a means of social cohesion and political manipulation that indirectly enhance the power of Austrian monarchs and their oppressive regime.[31]

Punishing Pizarro

Mathew and others have viewed the 1814 opera as participating in the mechanisms of the restrictive government in Metternich's Austria. In the 1805 and 1806 operas, the political message and alignment with official

state ideology still lack clarity and effectiveness, as becomes obvious in several didactic passages that accompany the resolution of the storyline associated with Pizarro.[32] Immediately after the first set of maxims—"Gott schützet die gerechte Sache . . ." in 1805 and 1806, and Fernando's brotherly maxim in 1814—Rocco calls Fernando's attention to the unjust and cruel treatment that the couple received from Pizarro. In the two earlier versions, the chorus responds by demanding punishment for Pizarro:

Bestrafet sey der Bösewicht,	The villain shall be punished,
der Unschuld unterdrückt!	the one who repressed innocence.
Hält nicht das strafende Gericht	**Doesn't the punishing institution hold**
der Rache Schwert gezückt?	**the sword of vengeance unsheathed?**

The generalized couplet that concludes this quatrain blames royal jurisdiction for ineffective supervision over high officials. Beethoven emphasizes this declaration of civil dissatisfaction when he switches from the harmonized homophony employed in lines 1 and 2 to complete monophony during the questioning couplet (ex. 4, mm. 116–24).

Beethoven and Treitschke must have eventually realized the potentially subversive content of the two lines, since they altered them in 1814:

Bestrafet sey der Bösewicht,	The villain shall be punished,
der Unschuld unterdrückt!	the one who repressed innocence.
Gerechtigkeit hält zum Gericht	**Ready for judgment, justice holds**
der Rache Schwert gezückt.	**its sword of vengeance unsheathed!**

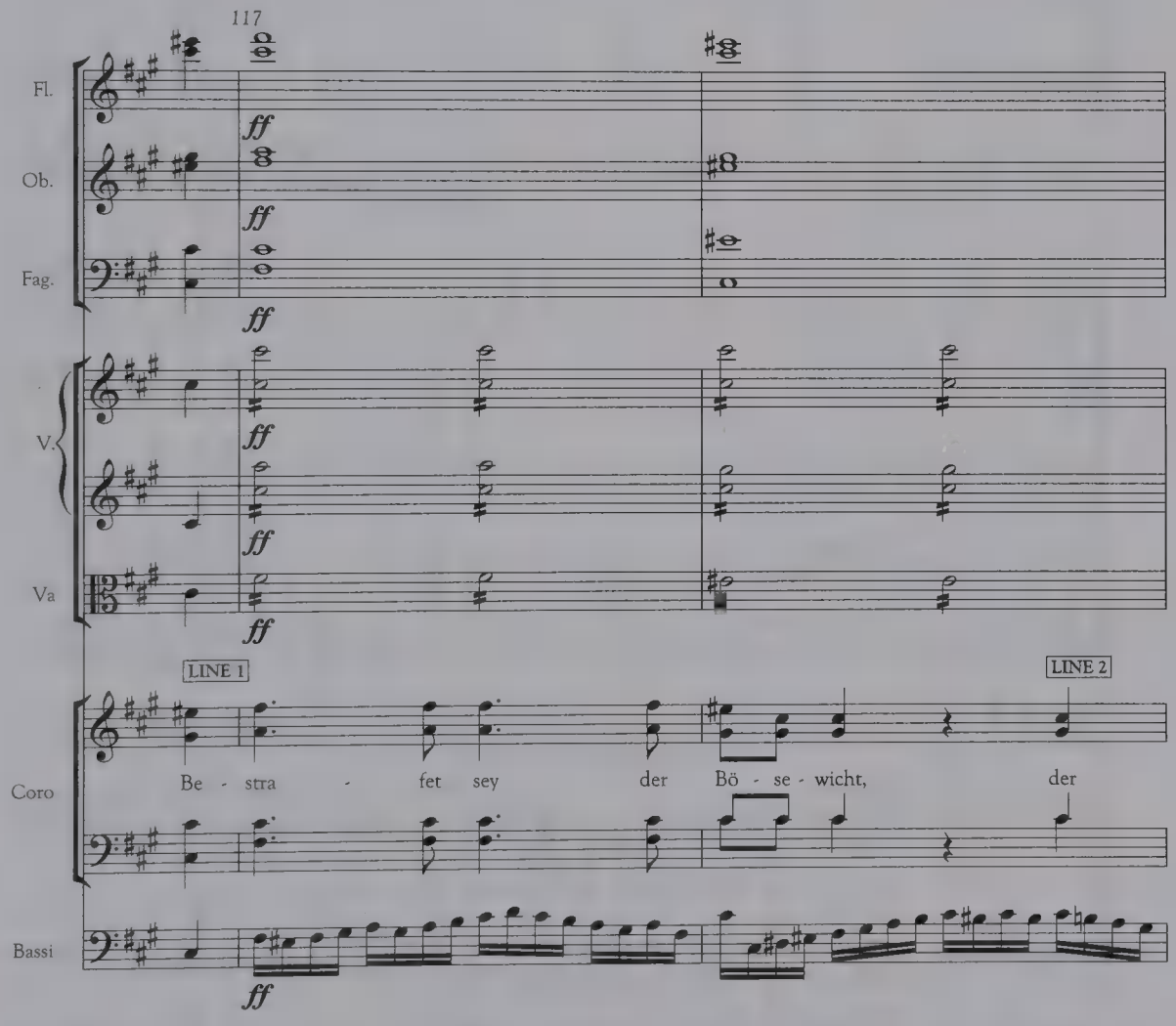
Lines 3 and 4 now affirm the reliability of justice-granting authorities in absolute terms, whereas the 1805 and 1806 phrasing undermined such a concept. This circumspect treatment of the politically allusive statement might indicate that between the opera's early and later versions, Beethoven and his librettists honed their skills in clear-cut political agitation.[33]

One more Pizarro-centered episode occurs in the 1805 finale, but disappears in 1806—it starts in measure 237 of the 1805 finale (Table 2). Fernando here announces his decision to commit Pizarro to spend the rest of his days chained to the same stone as Florestan. The chorus demands angrily that Pizarro be penalized in a more severe manner, but Leonore and Florestan beg for leniency:

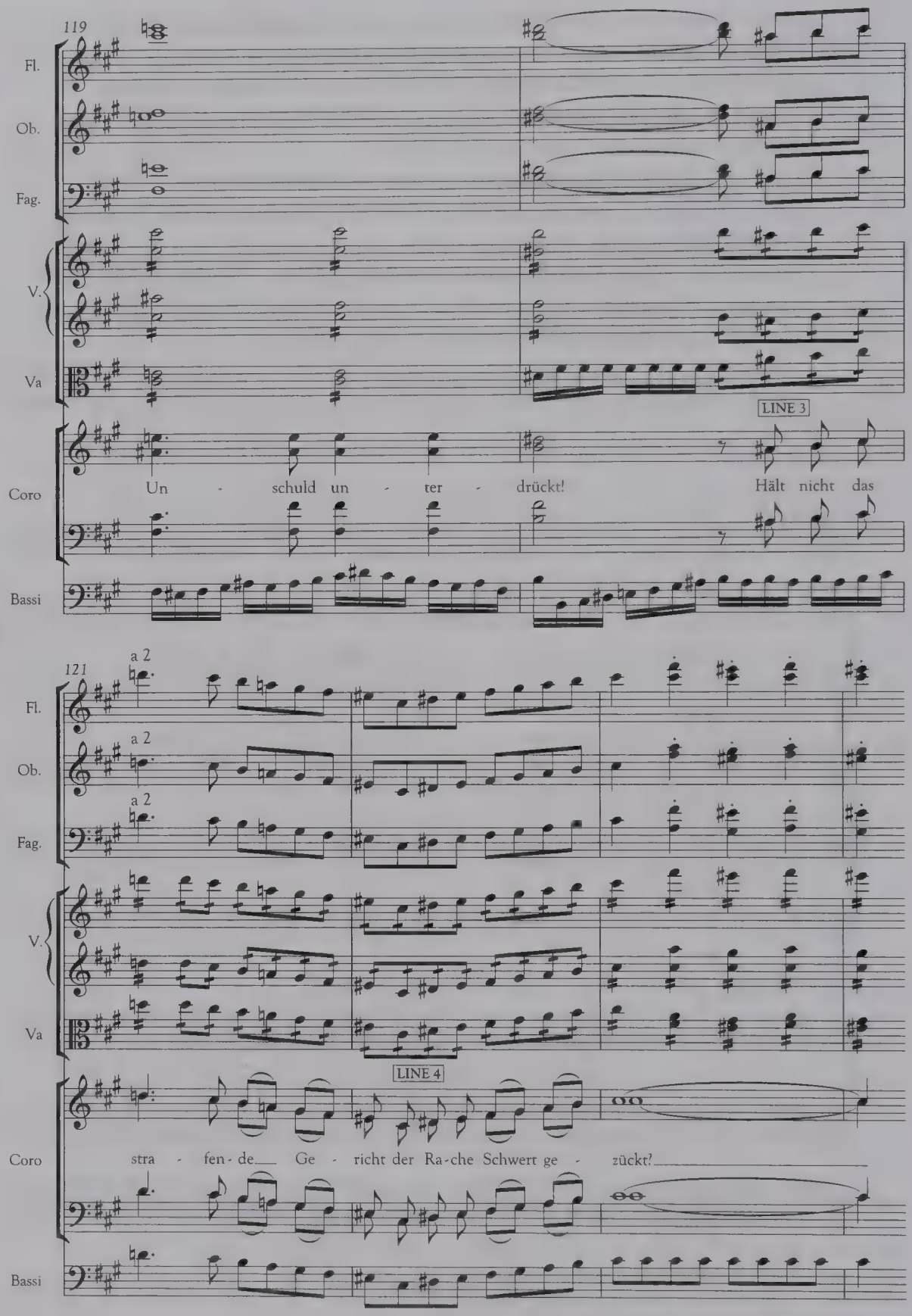
O nein! O nein! Erbarmt euch sein!	Oh no! Oh no! Have mercy on him!
Denn ihm/mir gab sein/mein Bewußtsein Kraft.	For he [Florestan] got strength [to endure the imprisonment] from his [innocent] conscience.

Leonore and Florestan do not simply plea for mercy in favor of Pizarro. Their second line also implies that righteous people cannot be destroyed by any affliction or suffering brought on them by their enemies, whereas wicked evildoers, such as Pizarro, can never show great physical and spiritual endurance.

The moment represents a more or less direct translation of Bouilly's libretto—one of the few didactic elements of the Viennese opera that actually originated in the French piece. But in the French work, the whole episode was in spoken dialogue, whereas in the 1805 *Leonore*, it receives a powerful accentuation through music. Beethoven emphasized the moment's significance by setting Leonore and Florestan's opening phrase in C major (ex. 5). This celebratory key, in which the opera will finish, symbolically negates the foreboding C minor



Example 4. Beethoven, *Leonore* (1805), act 3 finale—the chorus demands punishment of Pizarro and questions judicial authorities (mm. 117–24).



Example 4. Continued

Table 2. Religious contemplation and exemplary mercy (text includes Beethoven's repetitions) in the *Leonore/Fidelio* finales

1805	1806	1814
FERNANDO (*zu Rocco*): Du grubst des edlen Mannes Grab, jetzt nimm ihm seine Ketten ab. Doch halt'—Euch, edle Frau, allein, Euch ziemt es, ganz ihn zu befreyn! (*Leonore nimmt die Schlüßel, löst Florestan die Ketten ab, er will hervortreten, und sinkt in Roccos und Leonorens Arme*)	FERNANDO (*zu Rocco*): Du grubst des edlen Mannes Grab, jetzt nimm ihm seine Ketten ab. Doch halt'—Euch, edle Frau, allein, Euch ziemt es, ganz ihn zu befreyn! (*Leonore nimmt die Schlüssel, löst in größter Bewegung Florestan die Ketten ab, er sinkt in Leonorens Arme*)	FERNANDO (*zu Rocco*): Du schlossest auf des edlen Mannes Grab, jetzt nimm ihm seine Ketten ab! Doch halt! Euch, edle Frau, allein, euch ziemt es, ganz ihn zu befrei'n.
LEONORE: O Gott		LEONORE: O Gott! O welch' ein Augenblick!
LEON+FLOR+FERN+ROC+MARZ: O Gott—o welch' ein Augenblick! Ach unaussprechlich süßes Glück! **Gerecht, o Gott, ist dein Gericht, du prüfest, du verläßt uns nicht!**		FLORESTAN: O unaussprechlich süßes Glück! FERNANDO: **Gerecht, o Gott, ist dein Gericht!** MARZ+ROC: **Du prüfest, du verläßt uns nicht.**
CHOR: O Gott—o welch' ein Augenblick! ...	CHOR: O Gott—o welch' ein Augenblick! ...	CHOR+LEON+FLOR+MARZ+ROC+FERN: O Gott! O welch' ein Augenblick! O unaussprechlich süßes Glück! **Gerecht, o Gott, ist dein Gericht, du prüfest, du verläßt uns nicht.**
LEON+FLOR+FERN+ROC+MARZ: O Gott—o welch' ein Augenblick! ...	LEON+FLOR+FER+ROC+MARZ: O Gott—o welch' ein Augenblick! ...	

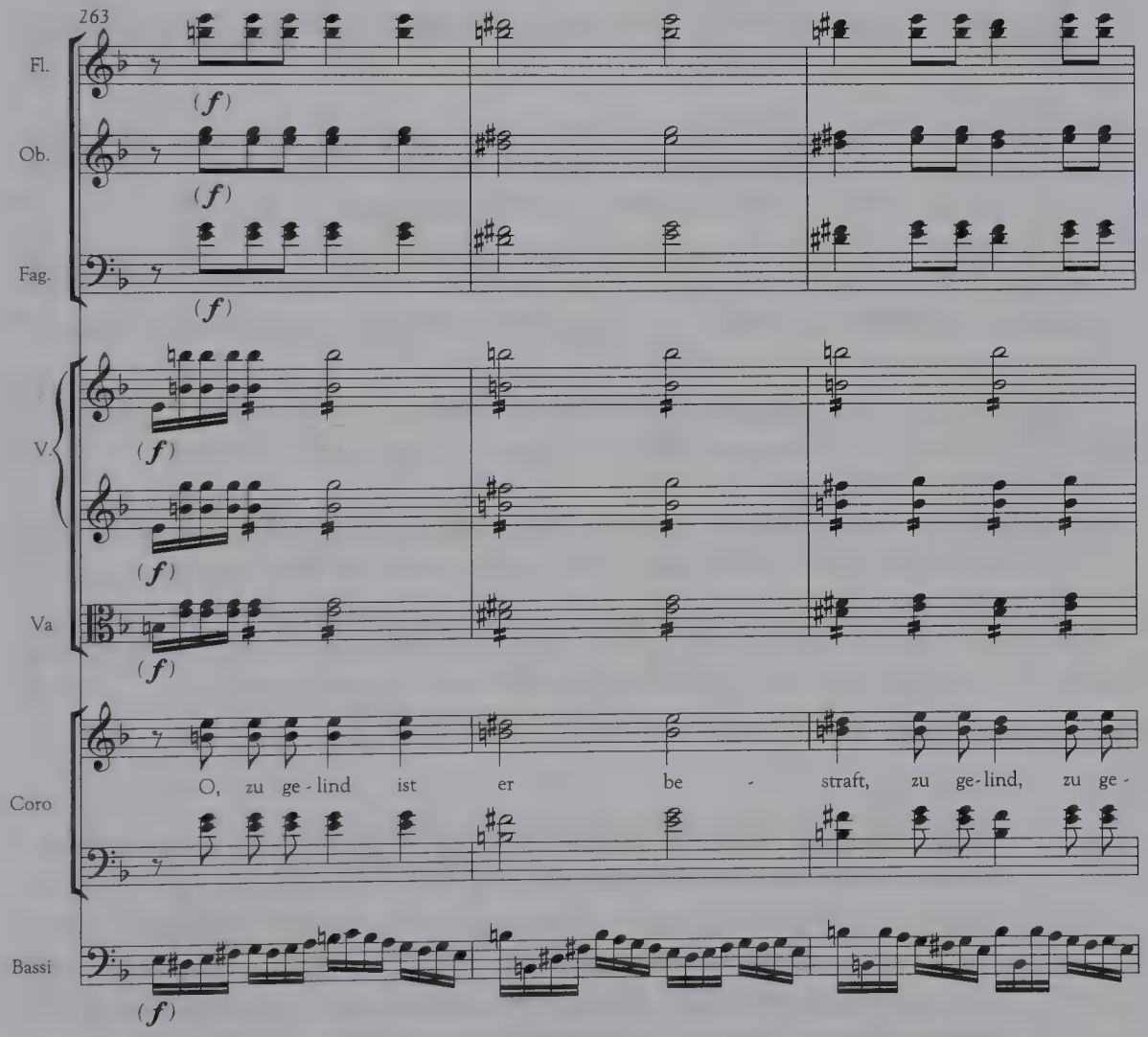
Continued

FERNANDO (*zu Florestan, auf die Ketten zeigend*): Wie lange habt ihr sie getragen?
FLORESTAN: Ich weiβ es nicht, denn mit den Tagen vermengten sich die Nächten hier.
FERNANDO (*zu Rocco*): Ihr, Alter, wißt es, sagt es mir!
ROCCO: Zwei Jahre sind's, ich irre nicht.
FERNANDO (*zu Pizarro*): So höre denn, du Bösewicht, du konntest dich an seinen Leiden zwei schreckenvolle Jahre weiden? Da wirst du nun an denselben Stein dein Leben durch geschmiedet sein.
CHOR: O, zu gelind ist er bestraft!
LEON+FLOR: O nein! O nein! Erbarmt euch sein! Denn ihm/mir gab sein/mein Bewuβtsein Kraft!
CHOR: Nein, nein! Zu gelind ist er bestraft.
FERNANDO: Der König wird sein Richter seyn; kommt, Freunde, laßt zu ihm uns eilen, er wird mit mir die Wonne theilen, verfolgte Unschuld zu befreyn.

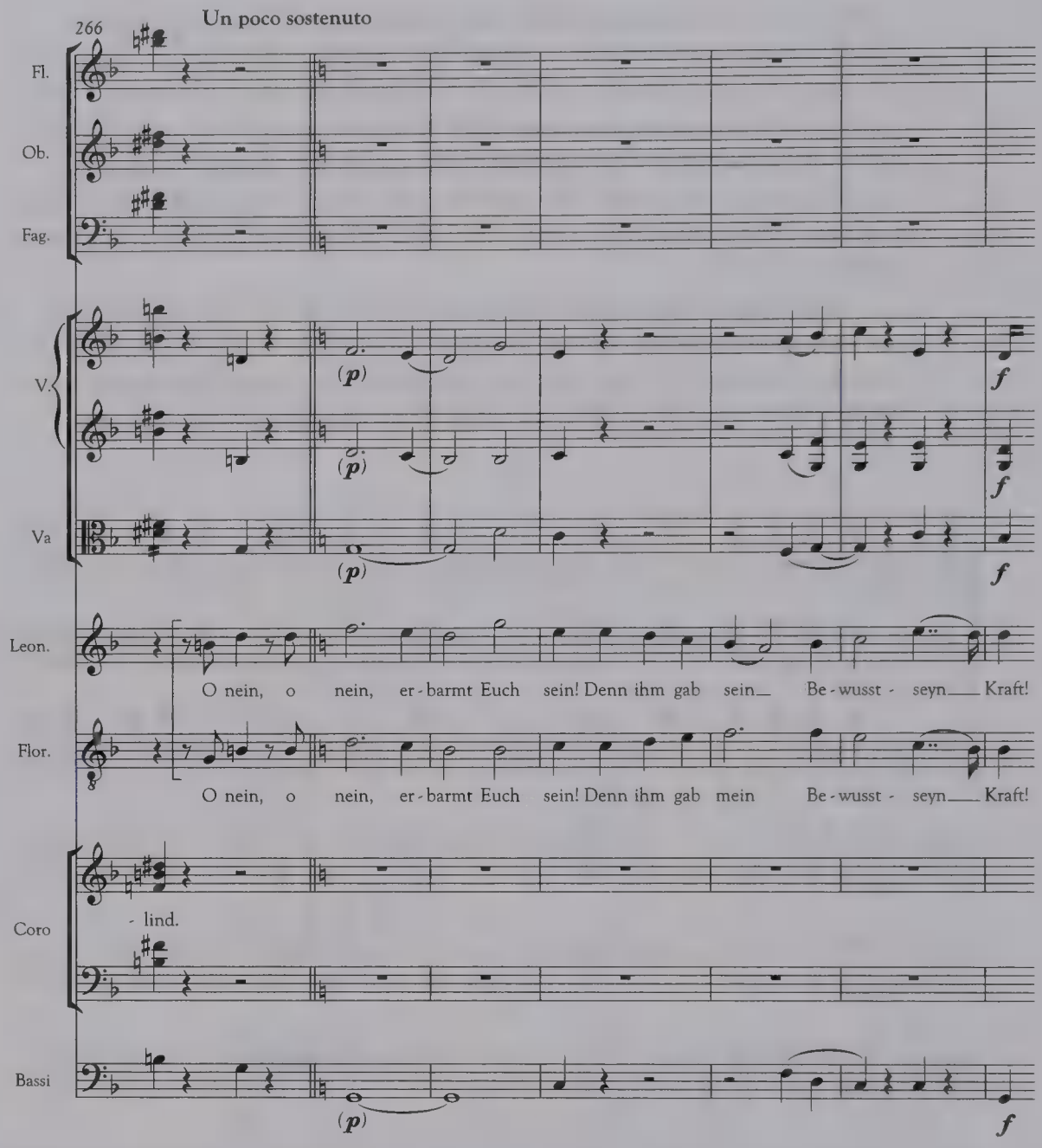
FERNANDO (*auf Pizarro zeigend*): Hinweg mit diesem Bösewicht! (*Wache führt den Pizarro ab*) (*zu den übrigen*) Uns, Freunde, winket süße Pflicht! Auf, lasset laut in diesen Hallen der Wonne Jubel hoch erschallen.

of the finale's opening and thus also connects this "heroic" work to other transformations from C minor to C major in Beethoven's output. The fact that Beethoven establishes this final key for the first time precisely at this moment (measure 269) bestows a special structural importance on the section and highlights the exemplary nature of Leonore and Florestan's behavior. The new tonality, moreover, clashes with the E minor of the vengeful chorus and sets the humane plea into an even sharper relief.[34]

Beethoven's emphatic differentiation of the chorus's threatening exclamations from the serene music of Leonore and Florestan creates yet another ambiguity in the opera's political subtext, and that might have been why it was cut as early as 1806. The serenity of Florestan and



Example 5. Beethoven, *Leonore* (1805), act 3 finale—Leonore and Florestan plead for Pizarro (mm. 263–71).



Example 5. Continued

Leonore's pleas does not manage to temper the chorus's vengeful intentions: its members continue to demand severe punishment for Pizarro (bending the tonal center back toward E). Eventually, Fernando orders that the king shall decide the villain's fate. Fernando's deference to the king represents the only addition by Sonnleithner to this section of the original French libretto. By incorporating the king, Sonnleithner must have been trying to make the finale seem more apt for Viennese

sensibilities. Yet even before Fernando calls upon the king, Beethoven's musical endorsement of Leonore and Florestan's pleas for mercy indicates to the spectators which position regarding Pizarro's future they should consider more desirable. By bringing out the correct solution through his music without disclosing what the absent king's final decision will be, Beethoven at this point implicitly, and perhaps unwittingly, undermines the arbitrary powers of absolutist rulers and suggests that the voice speaking through Leonore and Florestan represents a higher instance of moral authority.

This impression becomes even stronger in the following moments of the 1805 finale, in which Fernando asks the onstage crowd to hurry to the king so that he can decide Pizarro's fate:

Der König wird sein Richter seyn;	The king will be his [Pizarro's] judge,
kommt, Freunde, laßt zu ihm uns eilen,	come, friends, let us hurry to him,
er wird mit mir die Wonne theilen,	he will share my pleasure
verfolgte Unschuld zu befreyn.	of liberating persecuted innocence.

Instead of rushing toward the royal palace, however, all characters remain onstage and celebrate Leonore's courage and strength of character. The contradiction between Fernando's call for swift departure to see the king and the ensuing maxims that postpone this departure indefinitely diminishes the inferred authority of the absent royal figure; the people arrive at the moral of the story on their own without waiting for his majesty's judgment. This evasion from a direct acknowledgment of the king's powers sends an ambiguous message about the legitimacy of absolutist decisions. Conspicuously, the corresponding moments of the 1814 finale do not impart any specification about Pizarro's retribution and do not mention the king; the exact nature of the royal involvement in the final outcome of the story remains unknown and therefore untouched by possible subversive attitudes. It might have been that Beethoven and his librettists cut out these passages merely in order to make the finale tighter, shorter, and less wordy, yet in the process they also sharpened the political meaning of their opera.

Collectivism versus Individualism in "O welch' ein Augenblick"

Perhaps the most famous moment filled with "educational" proclamations occurs in the next section of all three finales (Table 2), and the differences between Beethoven's settings of this moment further detail the picture of the composer's changing conceptualization of theatrical didacticism. Fernando initiates this section when he asks Leonore to

remove her husband's chains. This simple action could be accomplished in a few seconds, yet in Beethoven's rendition, it gives rise to a colossal chunk of music spanning fifty-six measures in 1814 and ninety-five measures in 1805.[35] In the four-line text that motivates the extended moment of reflection, the onstage characters join Leonore to express thanks to God and contemplate godly providence:

O Gott! O welch' ein Augenblick!	Oh God! Oh what a moment!
O unaussprechlich süßes Glück!	Oh what unspeakably sweet joy!
Gerecht, o Gott, ist dein Gericht!	**Fair, oh God, is thy justice!**
Du prüfest, du verläßt uns nicht!	**You test us, yet you do not desert us!**

The quatrain's first couplet reflects the personal sentiments of the onstage characters, but lines 3 and 4 function akin to a didactic exhortation since they apostrophize a transcendental being (God) and promote a belief in divinity and in the essential fairness of fate.

The religious nature of the maxim fits well with the other homilies within the 1805 finale, but it does not match the secularized atmosphere of the 1814 version. Without taking into consideration the maxim's origin in the ecclesiastically inclined 1805 finale, Robinson doubts its significance and calls it a "theological platitude."[36] The grandeur of Beethoven's musical setting suggests, however, that the composer did not consider these statements platitudinous in 1805 and in 1814. Indeed, Robinson's understanding of didactic proclamations in Beethoven's operas is indebted to the anachronistic, twentieth-century view of didacticism as insincere and banal. Moral maxims were taken much more seriously in Beethoven's times. Claudia Maurer Zenck has pointed out, for example, that educated people in eighteenth-century Vienna and elsewhere loved maxims and practical words of wisdom.[37] Most of these maxims were passages of didactic content that late eighteenth-century writers newly created or carved out of preexisting texts, especially literature classics from antiquity but also works by their contemporaries.

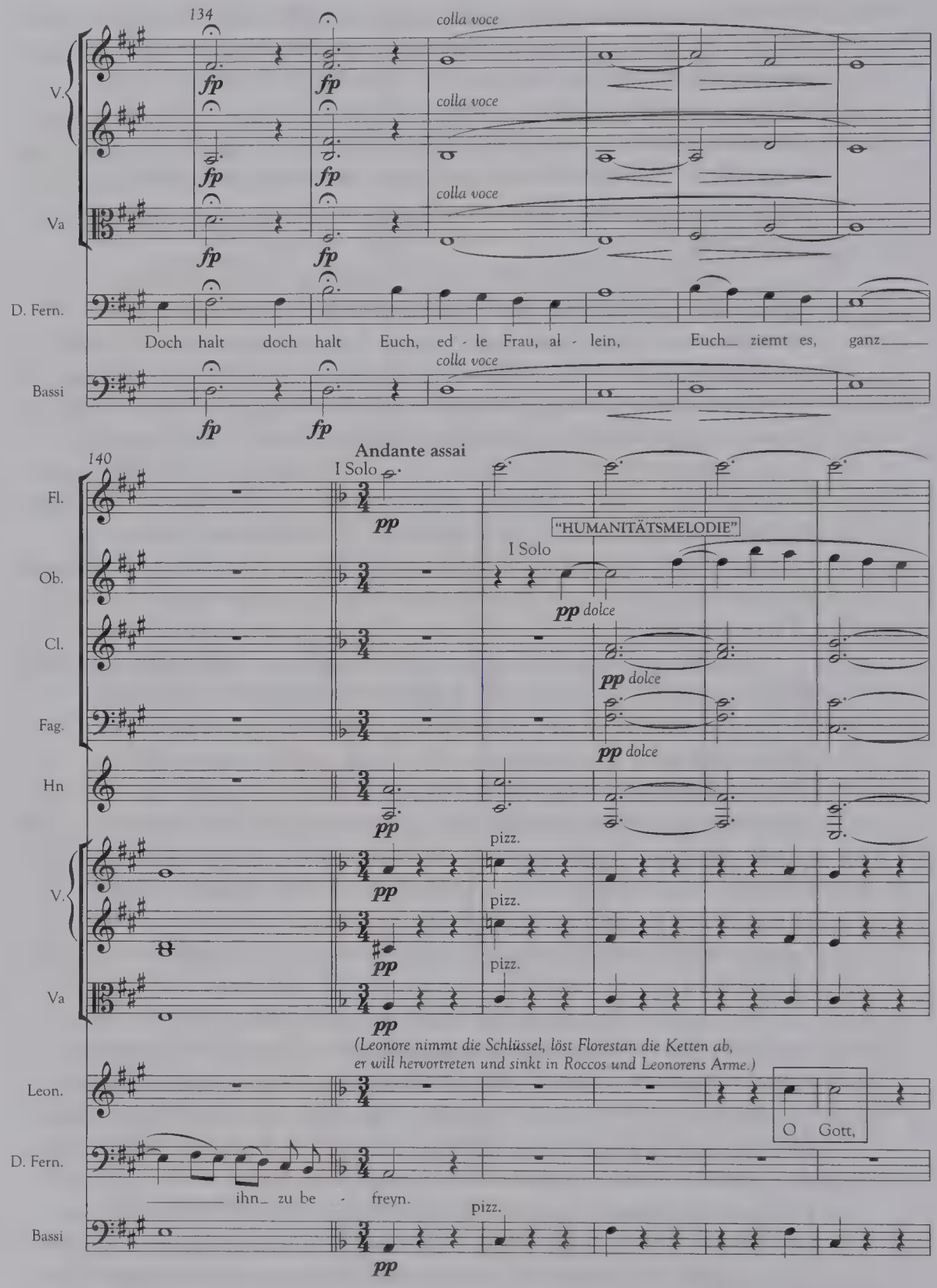
Beethoven was equally fond of maxims. Maynard Solomon relates how Beethoven "consciously patterned his life in emulation of a noble paradigm," proudly telling his friends "that he has been educated with proverbs."[38] He might have derived some of these proverbs and paradigms from his readings of Plutarch, especially from the *Parallel Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans*, which were a part of Beethoven's home library and which contain numerous apothegmatic passages.[39] The intensity of the moral lessons Plutarch taught to Beethoven reveals itself most notably in an 1801 letter to Franz Wegeler in which Beethoven informs his friend about his determination to face the onset of his deafness with patience: "I have often cursed my Creator and my existence.

Plutarch has shown me *the path of resignation* [Beethoven's emphasis]. If it is at all possible, I will bid defiance to my fate, though I feel that as long as I live there will be moments when I shall be God's most unhappy creature."[40] Both in the E-flat-major setting of Florestan's proclamation about self-control in the 1805 finale and in the "O welch' ein Augenblick" moment, Beethoven seems to emulate Plutarch's ability to exhort his readers to withstand adversity and follow their own paths of resignation.

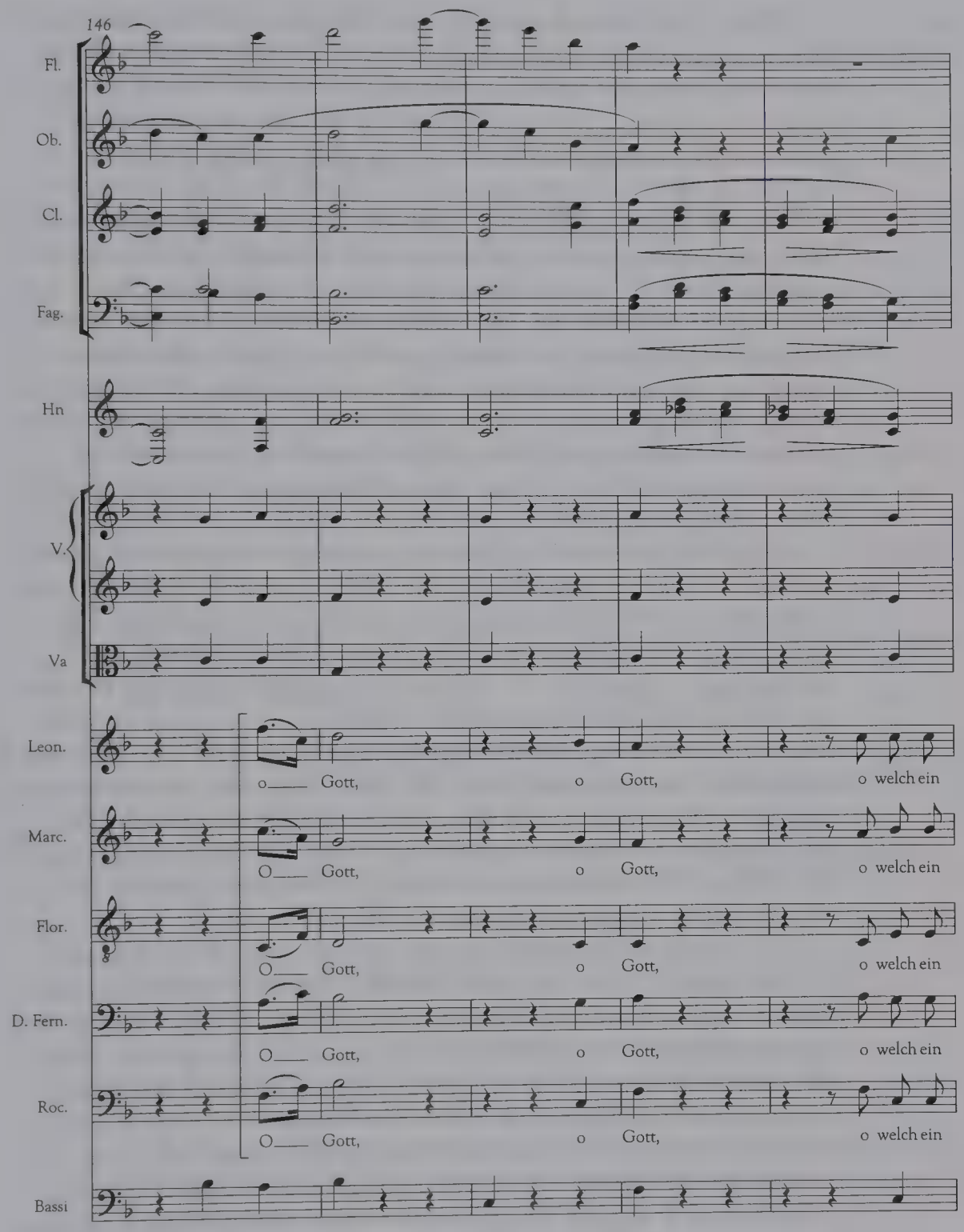
In addition to Plutarch, another major source of Beethoven's ethical ideas might have been the work of Immanuel Kant. Conspicuously, Beethoven got to know Kant not necessarily through readings of his works but through his encounters with pithy passages distilled from Kant's writings. Solomon explains that "Beethoven's was, of course, a popularized conception of Kant, one that had no room for Kant's epistemology or his exploration of the faculties of knowledge but that centered, rather, on basic moral concepts. . . . Beethoven understood Kant in a sloganized and simplified form."[41] Beethoven's reliance on maxims in his dealings with moral philosophy comes forth in the famous passage from his conversation book of February 1820 where he wrote: "The moral law in us, and the starry sky above us—Kant!!!"[42]

Beethoven's musical setting of Sonnleithner's "platitudes" in 1805 suggests that he certainly regarded them as a specimen of maxims worthy of veneration. At the beginning of the moralistic prayer, Beethoven once again generates a musical shift of rapturous effect (ex. 6): the tempo slows down from *meno allegro* to *andante assai*, the meter changes from common time to triple, and the A major that dominated the preceding action-filled scene suddenly gives way to F major (the flattened-six degree in A major); all of these musical changes enhance the impression that we are once more moving out of the onstage reality, this time into some ethereal world of religious (but also moralistic) contemplation.[43]

The prayer appears in all three versions of the opera, yet each time, Beethoven seems to have striven for a different dramaturgical effect. The 1805 setting makes it difficult for the audience to retain awareness of the individual onstage characters. As Alfred Heuss points out, the main dramatic focus lies on Leonore and possibly Florestan at this point; it is they who should experience and express the most gratitude and happiness. Yet, after Leonore's first words ("O Gott"), the vocal lines of the couple blend into a homophonic block of sound with the melodies of the other soloists for the following forty-one measures, in which the whole quatrain is proclaimed (ex. 6).[44] Once again, the composer creates an impression that the onstage reality recedes into the



Example 6. Beethoven, *Leonore* (1805), act 3 finale—the transition to "O Gott, O welch' ein Augenblick" (mm. 135–50).



Example 6. Continued

background and instead a transcendental narrator appears and delivers, through the voices and bodies of the solo singers, a significant announcement.

The 1806 finale omits this initial collective presentation of the prayer and picks up at the entrance of the chorus (measure 186 in the 1805 score; see Table 2). Although the chorus delivers the first line of the prayer on its own, Beethoven and Breuning retain the focus on the onstage individuals by introducing stage directions (absent in 1805), according to which Leonore takes off Florestan's chains, and afterward Florestan falls into her arms. Eight measures later, the soloists come in with individual utterances of the quatrain's first line. Such an opening places focus on the individual experience of the dramatic characters; the chorus comments as Leonore removes the chains, and then the soloists express, one by one, the characters' happiness about the fortuitous outcome of the drama. The collective manner of communication in the 1805 finale, by contrast, creates an impression that the main focus of the moment is not necessarily Leonore's act of liberation, but rather the process of impersonal reflection upon this act.

In 1806, Beethoven and Breuning significantly altered the overall feel of the "O welch' ein Augenblick" section mainly by removing forty-three measures at the beginning and by adding stage directions.[45] In 1814, the section underwent a more thorough transformation. Beethoven's setting shows an inclination toward differentiating the first and second couplets of the quatrain. The section now opens with the first line of the quatrain delivered by Leonore (mm. 172–77). Florestan follows with the second line (mm. 179–83). These two utterances represent the only instance within the section when the first, emotionally tinged couplet is presented by individual characters. This contrasts with the 1805 and 1806 versions where the soloists repeated the first two lines numerous times individually.

The 1814 section proceeds with the first line of the didactic couplet sung by Fernando (mm. 184–88). Marzelline and Rocco then present the final line and repeat it (mm. 188–97). The fact that only the fourth line of the quatrain ("Du prüfest . . . .") is repeated within this opening portion of the "Augenblick" section offsets the balance between impersonal morals and individualized emotions toward the former. It does not seem probable that Beethoven got rid of the 1806 soloistic annunciations of the first two lines to save time, since the 1814 section is actually longer than the 1806 one (fifty-six measures as opposed to fifty-two). The 1814 transformation points to a different conception of the moment, one in which moral reflection regains significance with respect to individual emotional expression, a conception, moreover, that resembles the one from 1805 and that seems to have been abandoned in 1806.[46] It is as if in 1814, Beethoven aimed

at establishing equilibrium between the long prayer of 1805, the repetitiveness of which smacks of preachiness, and the more individualistic, dissected revision of 1806.

The Final Maxims

The shifts of emphasis from collectivist to individualized modes of didactic reflection adumbrated in "O welch' ein Augenblick" mark most prominently the concluding section of the three finales. The manner in which Beethoven and his librettists introduce this final section signals important conceptual modifications. In the 1805 finale, "O welch' ein Augenblick" is followed by the exchange, discussed above, between the noble couple and the vengeful chorus. Fernando resolves this conflict and urges everyone to seek the king, but the other characters ignore his resolution, remain on stage, and celebrate Leonore. In 1806, Beethoven and Breuning replace this cumbersome transition with a recitative for Fernando (see the end of Table 2):

Uns, Freunde, winket süße Pflicht!	A sweet obligation awaits us, friends!
Auf, lasset laut in diesen Hallen	Let us fill these halls
der Wonne Jubel hoch erschallen!	with happy jubilation!

Fernando now invites the onstage crowds to celebrate the happy ending and thus introduces the following maxims as an outpouring of the onstage people's joy. The arrival of the edifying announcements thus acquires more subtlety, which parallels the stealthiness of the catechisms in the 1806 "O welch' ein Augenblick."

More complex deliberations seem to have occurred in the 1814 reworking of the transition. As Willy Hess has pointed out, in 1814, Beethoven played with the idea of retaining Fernando's recitative from 1806. While the speech appears in several manuscript scores of *Fidelio* created soon after the opera's premiere, it vanishes from the early published scores, including the 1814 vocal score, the only published version of the 1814 opera that Beethoven supervised. Because of the omission from the printed scores, the passage gradually disappeared from *Fidelio* performances. Hess claims that modern stage directors should consider bringing the passage back into use, since there is no indication that the omission reflected Beethoven's intentions.[47] The amount of interest the short passage (nine measures) raised in Beethoven's mind, however, also suggests that it did not comfortably fit the composer's concept of the opera's final moments. Perhaps the omission reflects not an error on the part of the early publishers but the composer's desire to distance the

closing section from the preceding portions of the finale. By having the final maxims follow the "Augenblick" moment without any introductory speech, Beethoven and Treitschke might have been trying to make the audience aware of the fact that they are being educated and thus once again make the finale more overtly didactic.

Whether arriving abruptly or after Fernando's introductory speech, the concluding section of all three versions features the opera's ultimate communication (see also Table 3):

Wer ein holdes Weib errungen,	Whoever has found a loving wife,
stimm' in unsren Jubel ein!	let him join in our jubilation,
Nie wird es zu hoch besungen,	One can never praise enough
Retterin des Gatten zu sein.	a wife who becomes the savior of her husband.

The statement turns Leonore's noble deeds and the need to emulate her example into a general principle. The first two lines of the quatrain bear a remarkable resemblance to a passage from the famous Friedrich Schiller poem "An die Freude" that Beethoven later used in his Ninth Symphony: "Wer ein holdes Weib errungen, / mische seinen Jubel ein" (Whoever has found a loving wife, let him join our jubilation). It remains a matter of speculation whether Sonnleithner introduced the maxim into the 1805 libretto at Beethoven's request—the composer planned to set the poem as early as 1793.[48] Even if the two Schiller-esque lines came from Sonnleithner, the intertextual resonances imbue the concluding section of the opera with an aura of universal validity; as if the maxim represented a piece of common poetic wisdom that pertains not only to the onstage reality but also to the outside world.

In 1805, Beethoven detached the maxim from the previous parts of the finale by another moment of musical rupture involving a grand pause, a change in dynamics (*fortissimo* to *piano*), tempo (*Allegro molto* to *Maestoso*), and musical style—bombastic celebratory chorus with prominent brass accompaniment to noble, majestic march with pizzicato string and woodwind accompaniment (ex. 6, mm. 306–8). Since it does not signal any dramatic change in the plot or in the emotional attitudes of onstage characters, this rupture is even more idiosyncratic than the one that introduced "O welch' ein Augenblick."

Several elements of Beethoven's text setting further emphasize the sublimated nature of the edifying presentation that follows. Only four singers—the soloists without Florestan, Leonore, and Pizarro declaim the maxim the first time around.[49] They divide into two antiphonal groups: Marzelline, Jacquino, and Rocco sing a line, and Fernando

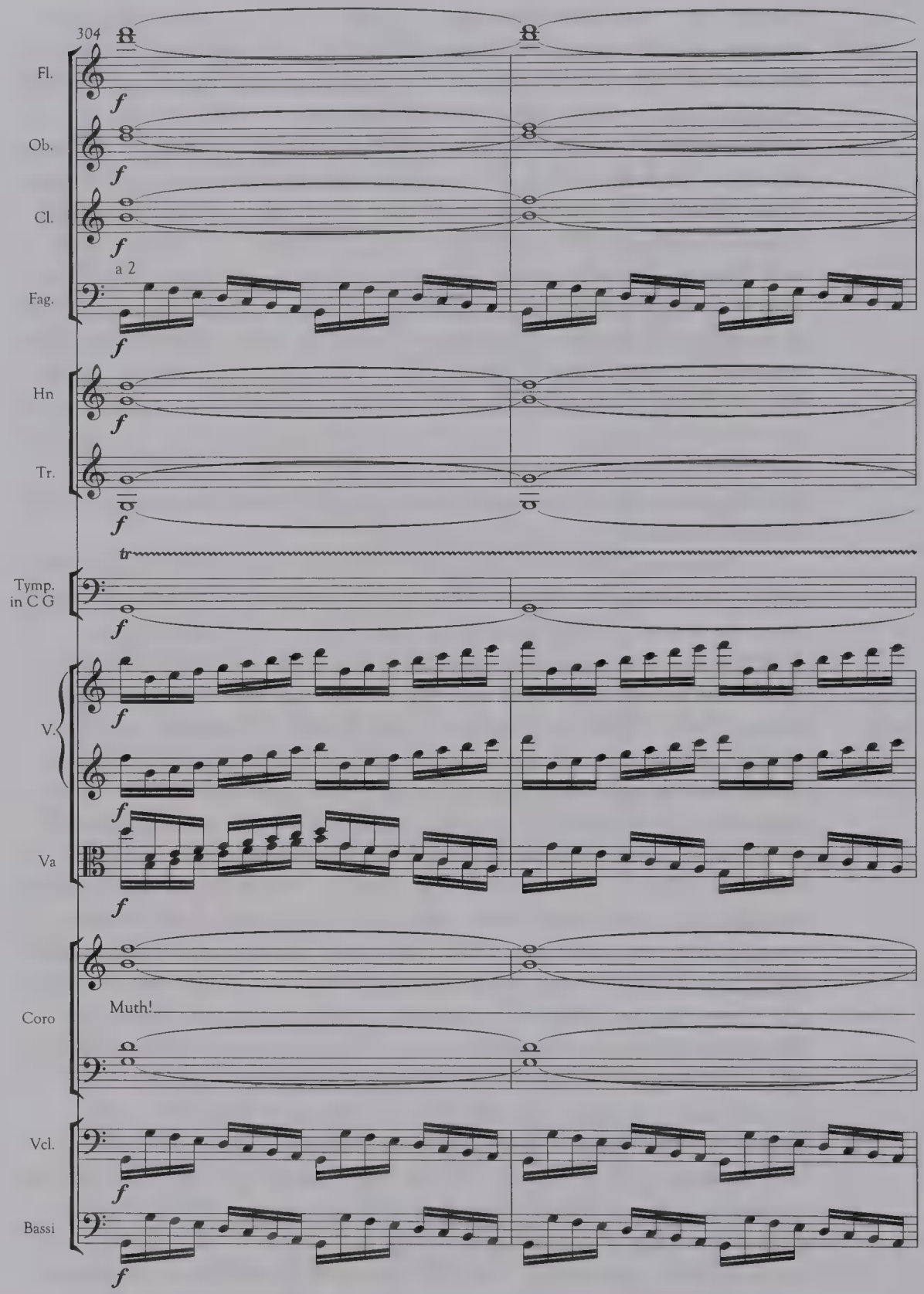
Table 3. Concluding maxims of the *Leonore/Fidelio* finales

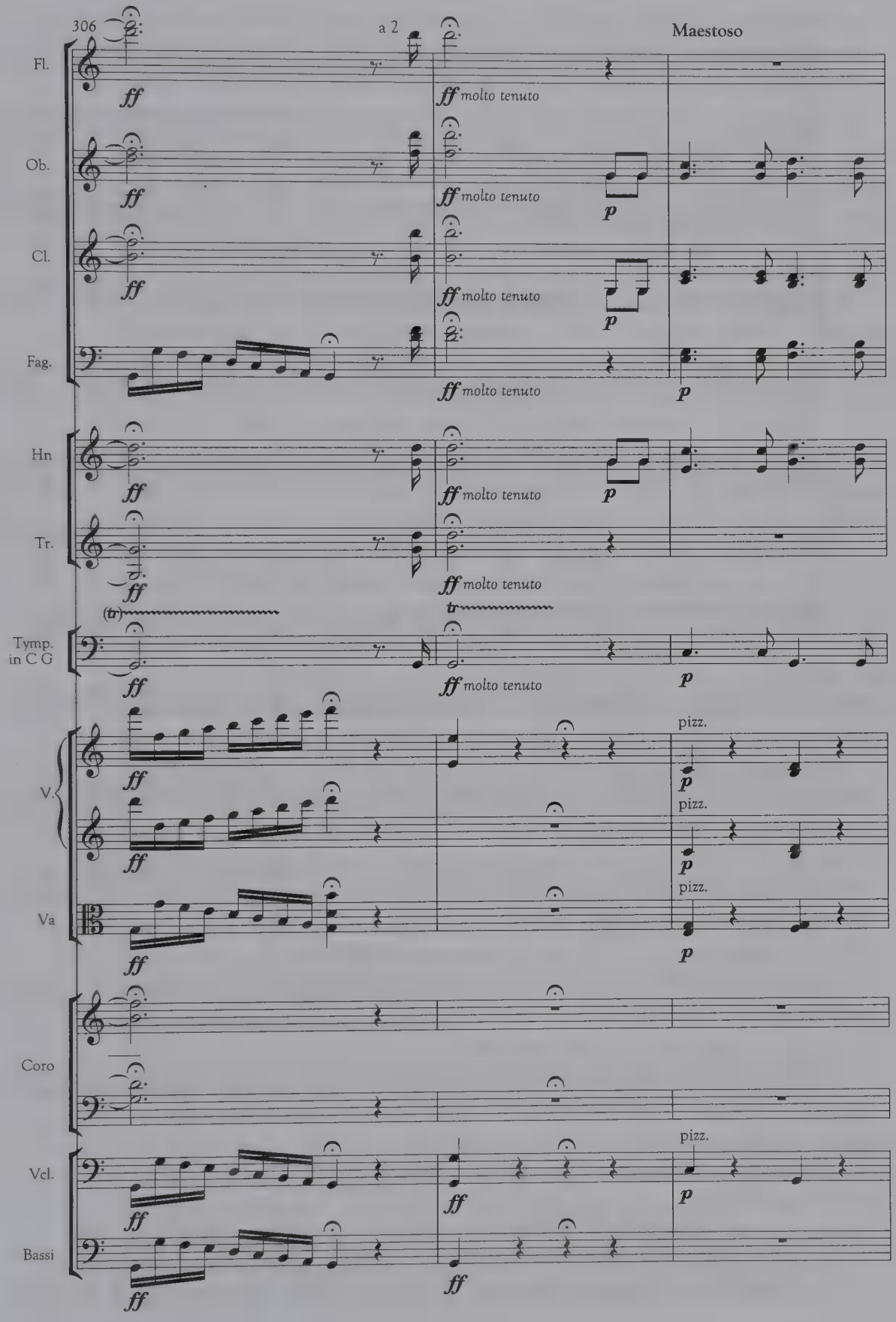
1805	1806	1814
CHOR: Preist mit hoher Freude Glut Leonorens edlen Mut!		
MARZ+JAC+ROC+FERN: Wer ein **holdes** Weib errungen, stimm' in unsren Jubel ein! Nie wird es zu hoch besungen, Retterin des Gatten zu sein.	MARZ+JAC+ROC+FERN: Wer ein **holdes** Weib errungen, stimm' mit unsren Jubel ein! Nie wird es zu hoch besungen, Retterin des Gatten zu sein.	
CHOR: Wer ein **holdes** Weib errungen . . .	CHOR: Wer ein **holdes** Weib errungen . . .	CHOR: Wer ein **holdes** Weib errungen . . .
FLORESTAN: Deine Treu' erhielt mein Leben, **Tugend schreckt den Bösewicht.**	FLORESTAN: Deine Treu' erhielt mein Leben, **Tugend schreckt den Bösewicht.**	FLORESTAN: Deine Treu' erhielt mein Leben, **Tugend schreckt den Bösewicht.**
LEONORE: Liebe führte mein Bestreben, **wahre Liebe fürchtet nicht.**	LEONORE: Liebe führte mein Bestreben, **wahre Liebe fürchtet nicht.**	LEONORE: Liebe führte mein Bestreben, **wahre Liebe fürchtet nicht.**
CHOR: Preist mit hoher Freude Glut Leonorens edlen Mut!	CHOR: Preist mit hoher Freude Glut, Leonorens edlen Mut!	CHOR: Preist mit hoher Freude Glut, Leonorens edlen Mut!
FLOR+CHOR: Wer ein **solches** Weib errungen . . .	FLOR+CHOR: Wer ein **solches** Weib errungen . . .	FLOR+CHOR: Wer ein **solches** Weib errungen. . .

Continued

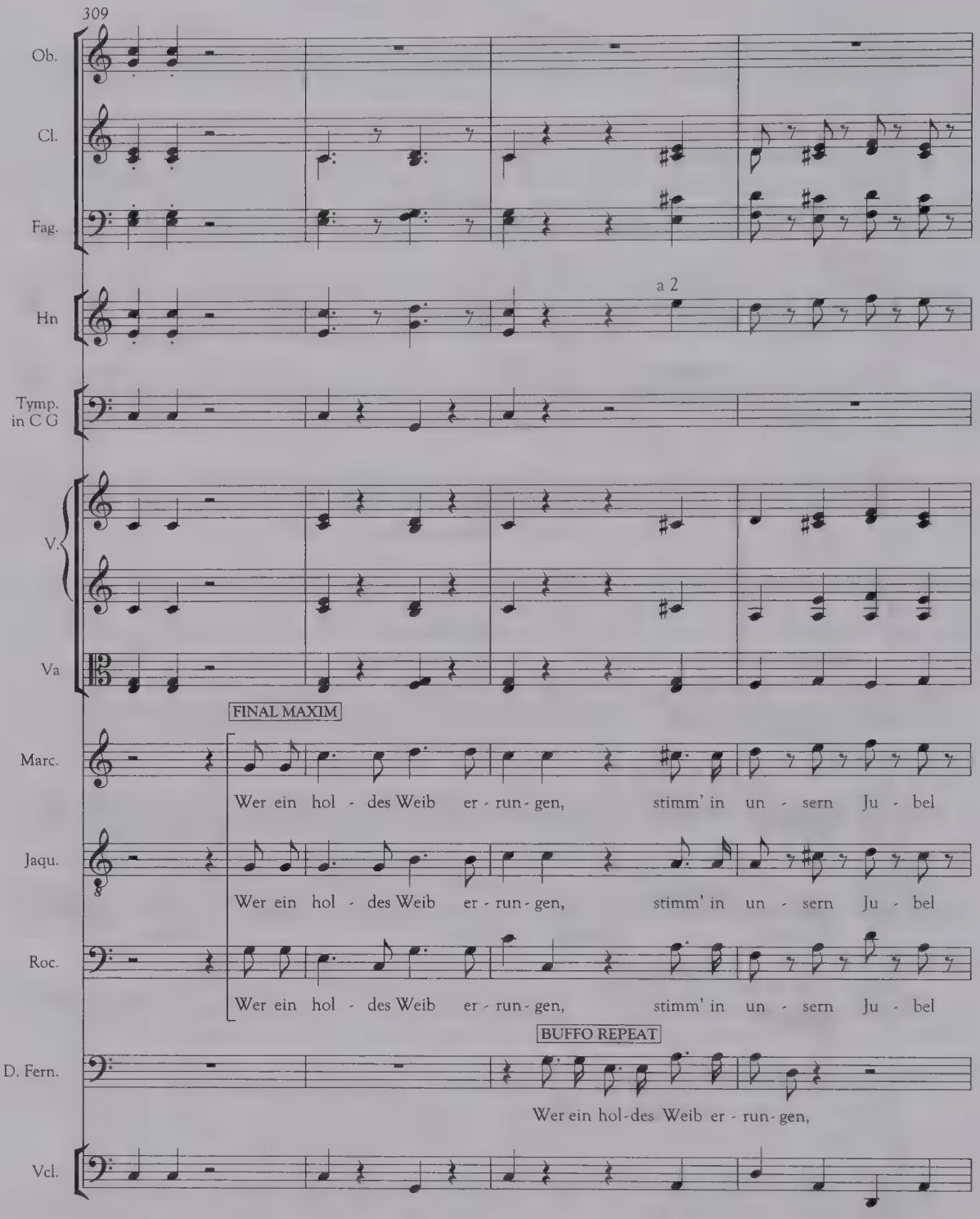
	LEONORE: Liebend ist es mir gelungen, **dich** aus Ketten zu befrein, liebend sei es hoch gesungen, Florestan ist wieder mein!	LEONORE: Liebend ist es mir gelungen, **dich** aus Ketten zu befrein, liebend sei es hoch gesungen, Florestan ist wieder mein!
	CHOR: Wer ein **solches** Weib errungen . . .	MARZ+JAC+FERN+ROC: Wer ein **solches** Weib errungen . . .
CHOR: Wer ein **holdes** Weib errungen. . .	CHOR: Wer ein **solches** Weib errungen . . .	CHOR: Welch ein **holdes** Weib errungen . . .
	LEONORE: Liebend ist es mir gelungen, **dich** aus Ketten zu befrein . . .	LEONORE: Liebend ist es mir gelungen, **ihn** aus Ketten zu befrein . . .
		OTHER SOLOISTS: Liebend ist es ihr gelungen, ihn/mich aus Ketten zu befrein . . .

repeats the phrase after them (ex. 7, mm. 309–26). Such a procedure ensures that every single line resounds twice, giving greater exposure to the educational announcement. The repetitions also make it seem as if Fernando were learning the individual phrases from the trio. In the preceding section of the finale, Fernando controlled the situation and made decisions; now the body and voice that represented this character listen to and imitate the other three personas. The style in which Fernando repeats the maxim, moreover, has a tinge of *buffo* patter that clashes with Fernando's earlier *seria* style of accompanied recitative. Beethoven thus no longer adheres to principles pertaining to the musical portrayal of social hierarchy among onstage individuals, which adds further to the estranged atmosphere of the moment. In the next section (mm. 326–43), the chorus takes its turn singing the maxim. This gives the impression that the chorus has learned the didactic message from the previous speakers—a musical representation perhaps of the often-repeated Enlightenment idea that moral wisdom should spread from select, high-minded individuals to the broader masses.[50]

Beethoven nuances his didactic rhetoric even further at the very end of the finale. The maxim returns in a section where Florestan sings alone with choral accompaniment (mm. 379–412). Sonnleithner changed the original phrasing at this point: instead of "Wer ein *holdes* Weib" (Whoever has found a *loving* wife) the libretto assigns "Wer ein *solches* Weib" (Whoever has found *such* a wife) to Florestan and the chorus. Sonnleithner's replacement of the original adjective with a demonstrative pronoun creates the impression that Florestan is once again referring directly to Leonore—"solches Weib"—and thus recalls the illusion of onstage reality. The 1805 libretto concludes with the "Wer ein *solches* . . . " version of the quatrain, but in the musical setting, Beethoven starts a new section (measure 413), in which the maxim returns to its original form, "Wer ein *holdes*." The music of this section shifts to a collectivist mode of expression; the solo voices disappear from the score, and only the choral masses remain to reiterate the maxim. Beethoven brings out the seriousness of the moment with an exalted *alla breve* meter and learned, contrapuntal style developed in two canonic sections (mm. 415 and 441).[51] Thus a change of a single word—"holdes" into "solches" back to "holdes"—gives rise to three large sections with strikingly different music, each reflecting the absence or presence of an individualistic agent (Florestan).[52] The composer's decision to alter the libretto and mark the alteration with significant musical shifts suggests that in 1805, he wanted to achieve the greatest estranging effect possible and thus make the edifying features of the opera more explicit.

Example 7. Beethoven, *Leonore* (1805), act 3 finale—the transition to the final maxim (mm. 304–12).



Example 7. Continued


309
Ob.
Cl.
Fag.
Hn
a 2
Tymp. in C G
V.
Va
FINAL MAXIM
Marc.
Wer ein hol - des Weib er - run - gen, stimm' in un - sern Ju - bel
Jaqu.
Wer ein hol - des Weib er - run - gen, stimm' in un - sern Ju - bel
Roc.
Wer ein hol - des Weib er - run - gen, stimm' in un - sern Ju - bel
BUFFO REPEAT
D. Fern.
Wer ein hol-des Weib er - run - gen,
Vcl.

Example 7. Continued

The 1806 transformation of the final maxim strengthens the impression that in their revision, Beethoven and Breuning wanted to instruct in a subdued manner. Unlike in 1805, the very end of the 1806

opera (mm. 268ff) does not return to "Wer ein *holdes*." Instead, it combines the more concrete version of the final maxim, "Wer ein *solches*," sung by the chorus with a new quatrain in which Leonore expresses her own sentiments:

Liebend ist es mir gelungen,	With love I managed
dich aus Ketten zu befrein,	to liberate **you** [Florestan] from chains,
liebend sei es hoch gesungen,	with love shall it be sung loudly,
Florestan ist wieder mein!	Florestan is mine again!

The fact that Breuning's new quatrain has Leonore address Florestan directly (through the pronoun "dich") ensures that the illusion of onstage action continues until the very end of the opera. Whereas in 1805, the onstage characters were dissolved into a unified didactic voice, in 1806, they remain perceivable as individuals.

Beethoven reflects the greater individualism by having Leonore's voice soar above the chorus until the end of the opera. The high register of Leonore's vocal line and her extended melodic phrases require great physical strength and enormous breath control from the performer and thus symbolize the titanic heroism of the main character. Several melodic details, moreover, especially the grace notes on Leonore's exclamations of her husband's name (mm. 314–17), bring a touch of sentimentality. The textual and musical changes suggest that Beethoven and Breuning were less interested in preaching explicitly and instead wanted to affect the audience's sensibilities by emphasizing Leonore's strong personality, her happiness, and the joy experienced by the onstage characters.

In the final moments of the 1814 opera, Beethoven and Treitschke suppress the 1806 focus on the emotions of the onstage characters, yet they do not completely return to the preachiness of 1805. Their new conception becomes especially obvious in the *presto molto*, the final stretto of the 1814 finale (mm. 291–end). The most obvious point of departure away from the subtle didacticism of 1806 is signaled by the fact that the generalized form of the final maxim, "Wer ein *holdes*," returns at the very end of the 1814 finale. As in 1805, the maxim now changes twice (holdes–solches–holdes), and the final switch to "holdes" makes the opera's didacticism more explicit.

Several other textual changes in this final *presto molto* point to a refined concept of moral edification. Beethoven and Treitschke retained Leonore's concluding quatrain from 1806, "Liebend ist es mir gelungen," but they replaced the "dich" at the beginning of Leonore's second line with the pronoun "ihn." Leonore now no longer directs her statement at Florestan: "dich aus Ketten zu befrein" (to liberate *you* from chains), but talks about him in the third person: "ihn aus Ketten zu befreien" (to

liberate *him* from chains). The narrative mode shifts away from dramatic interaction toward explanation and commentary. As a result, in 1814, Leonore does not dissolve into the choral mass as she did in 1805, but unlike in 1806, she does seem to remove herself from the onstage drama and comment on it as if from an outsider's point of view, or in an aside. The other soloists, too, avoid complete dissolution into the chorus, yet convert from participants into commentators. Unlike in 1805, they do not join the final choral presentation of "Wer ein holdes Weib" and instead appropriate a modified version of Leonore's quatrain.

Beethoven weaves these choral and soloistic statements together antiphonally in the manner of eighteenth-century sacred music, especially Handel's and Haydn's oratorios.[53] Antiphonal passages also often appear in the finales of eighteenth-century *opere buffe* produced in Vienna, such as in the act 1 finale of *Don Giovanni*. As John Platoff has pointed out, the antiphonal style in Mozart's finale nevertheless contributes to the rising dramatic excitement of the moment.[54] The more dignified antiphonal style in *Fidelio*, by contrast, does not serve a specific dramatic purpose but, similar to passages from sacred music, functions as a rhetorical emphasis for the final didactic announcements. The archaic and elevated style of this concluding music chases away the emotionality of 1806, replacing it with an aura of solemnity, and thus partially returning to the spirit of 1805.

The Aesthetics of Overt and Subtle Didacticism

The consistent character of the musical reorganizations in both "O welch' ein Augenblick" and the concluding section of the finale points to the possibility that a specific aesthetic impulse guided the revisions of didactic passages in the three operas. Pia Janke has identified the vision behind the 1806 reworking within the eighteenth-century genre of sentimental comedy.[55] Her views may have grown out of Carl Dahlhaus's idea that the differences between the three versions of *Fidelio* can be explained in terms of the traditions of eighteenth-century drama, especially *comédie larmoyante* and "bourgeois tragedy."[56]

Dahlhaus does not provide any specific examples of what he understands under the term *comédie larmoyante* and "bourgeois tragedy." In his discussion of bourgeois tragedy, however, Dahlhaus seems to refer to a type of theatrical work that was introduced to German theater through the plays and aesthetic theories of Johann Christoph Gottsched, especially his famous treatise *Versuch einer kritischen Dichtkunst*, first published in 1730. Gottsched called for a new type of German drama that would be modeled upon the principles of French neoclassical dramas of

the previous century. He also prescribed pieces that would contain emphatically edifying plots and make their audiences aware of the moral significance behind such plots.

In their plays, German followers of Gottsched often engage in presenting moral reflection in absolute terms; through distanced, impersonal maxims drawn from the ongoing plot. Discussions of how playwrights should fill their works with maxims and how actors should employ specific gestures to accentuate these maxims in their performance abound in German aesthetic treatises throughout the rest of the eighteenth century. A substantial discussion of maxims comes forth in Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* (1767–69) and also in the numerous writings by Friedrich Schiller, to name just the most important representatives of such theories.[57]

Soon after the publication of Gottsched's most important works on theater aesthetics in the 1730s, certain younger German intellectuals turned against what many twentieth-century commentators refer to as Gottsched's "overbearing didacticism."[58] One of the earliest expressions of such dissent appears in the writings of Johann Elias Schlegel, originally a Gottsched protégé who later turned against his mentor. As far as moral functions of theater are concerned, Schlegel differed from Gottsched because he claimed that plays and dramas should deliver their moral teachings surreptitiously without making the audience aware of the fact that they are being preached to.[59] Schlegel's theory of drama thus departs from Gottsched's neoclassical didacticism in that it calls for works that seek to turn audiences into better human beings not by preaching to them directly but by presenting entertaining plots that make the spectators sympathize with virtuous heroes and heroines and abhor depraved villains.[60] Such ideas reverberated through the rest of the eighteenth century. For example, the renowned actor August Wilhelm Iffland, who became the director of the Berlin National Theater in 1796, noted about the lack of success of overtly moralistic works that "audiences simply refuse to be led, as soon as they realize that someone is trying to lead them."[61]

Schlegel's way of understanding theatrical didacticism coincides somewhat with the kind of didacticism that Dahlhaus finds in *comédie larmoyante* and Janke in what she identifies as sentimental comedy. As Janke explains, in this type of theatrical spectacle, it was no longer the strict Gottschedian rationalism, but rather a direct presentation of emotional outpourings that served as the main didactic force.[62] The quest for turning the audience into better humans through an awakening of empathy later became an important aspect of Lessing's theories of drama.

One can therefore discern two opposing impulses associated with didacticism within eighteenth-century German theater. The first one calls for a direct presentation of moral ideas, through maxims and explicitly homiletic addresses to the spectators, whereas the second aims at a more subtle way of educating the audience. In many eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century theatrical and theoretical works, we see authors struggling to find a balance between the two impulses. In *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, for example, Lessing develops an influential theory of humanizing empathy, yet also spells out a theory of theatrical maxims. Similarly, in a series of essays titled *Briefe über die Wienerische Schaubühne* (first published in the 1760s), the Viennese aesthetician Joseph von Sonnenfels discusses the importance of maxims and at the same time warns against using them too often.[63]

Maxims and other elements associated with the intense Gottschedian didacticism also continue to appear both in tragedy and in sentimental comedy throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Numerous German opera composers and librettists, moreover, create operatic comedies that combine indirect educational entertainment with direct moral edification spelled out through carefully worked-out maxims. Mozart and his operas, both Italian and German, represent the most familiar examples of such theatrical schools of morals.[64] But greater or lesser amounts of maxims and other educational announcements appear also in the singspiels produced in Vienna in the period between Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* and Beethoven's 1805 *Leonore*. This includes Emanuel Schikaneder's libretto of *Vestas Feuer*, which Beethoven started setting to music in 1803 but never finished.

At times the impulse toward subtle moralizing overwhelms the impulse toward explicit didacticism. The author of the famous *Preface to Alceste* (be it Raniero de Calzabigi or Christoph Willibald Gluck), for example, complains about earlier operas' "unnatural paragons, and sententious, cold morality."[65] The ensuing opera contains hardly any maxims and finishes with a chorus of celebration, as opposed to the earlier *Orfeo ed Euridice* that concluded with a homiletic vaudeville finale. Similar changes of taste must have occurred in the mind of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. In Book 7 of his *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (published in 1811), Goethe looks at his own early singspiel libretti, and criticizes their moralistic "seriousness."[66] He also recommends pieces, such as Beaumarchais's *Le Marriage de Figaro* and Cherubini's *Les Deux Journées*, that present moral ideas but are not too explicit about it. As Elmar Bötcher has shown, moreover, in the revision of his early libretti—especially in *Erwin*

und Elmire and *Claudine von Villa Bella*—Goethe substantially reduced the amount of explicitly moralistic elements.[67]

Thus perhaps the difference between the 1805 and 1806 conception of theatrical presentation of morals should not be seen as a reflection of an indebtedness to two different types of eighteenth-century drama, as Dahlhaus suggests, because no rigid boundaries existed between them, at least not in terms of didactic concerns. Instead, Beethoven and his librettists' transformations of educational elements within the *Leonore/Fidelio* finales might be understood as closely reflecting the complex negotiations between the two main impulses of eighteenth-century theatrical didacticism. It seems that in 1805, Beethoven and Sonnleithner took a more conservative (or Gottschedian) approach to the issue in that they put emphasis on collective, impersonal announcements of moral ideas. In 1806, Beethoven and Breuning succumbed to the impulse to present moral ideas in a more subtle way, emphasizing instead the emotional experience of the onstage individuals. In 1814, Beethoven and Treitschke looked for yet another mode of educating their audience and ended up with a version that stands in between the impersonal, sententious first version and the more emotionally charged second version.[68] Beethoven and Treitschke thus seem to be going against the general trend within German theater toward greater didactic subtlety, exemplified by Goethe and Iffland.[69]

The emotional immediacy and lack of overt moralistic fervor, moreover, put the 1806 version closer to the French opéra comique tradition, which provided, through the Bouilly's *Léonore ou L'amour conjugal*, the initial incentive for the conception of *Leonore/Fidelio*. Numerous sources establish that, unlike the 1805 *Leonore* and the 1814 *Fidelio*, late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century French opera did not involve intense moralizing. In their discussions of the works by Michel-Jean Sedaine, an important French opéra comique librettist, twentieth-century scholars have noted that although Sedaine was interested in adding didactic features to his works, he never presented them through immediately obvious moralizing.[70] Thus in his reworking of 1806, Breuning accomplishes a partial return to the spirit of French comic opera, from which Sonnleithner's 1805 work departed radically and which Beethoven and Treitschke abandoned once again in 1814.

Complex Transformations

The transformations of edifying elements within the individual versions of the *Leonore/Fidelio* finales, however, most probably resulted from more than purely dramaturgical and aesthetic considerations. As shown above,

each finale seems to have been conditioned by the political and cultural transformations of Viennese society in the first two decades of the nineteenth century. Certain parts of the three works indicate, moreover, that during the nine years separating the first and final versions Beethoven honed his compositional and rhetorical skills. Beethoven himself notices the refining quality of his alterations in 1814 when he writes, in a letter to Treitschke of 14 May 1814: "Let me add that this whole opera business is the most tiresome affair in the world, for I am dissatisfied with most of it—and—there is hardly a number in it which *my present dissatisfaction would not have to patch up here and there with some satisfaction*" (original emphasis).[71] The contradictory wording of this sentence (mixing up dissatisfaction with satisfaction) continues the shipwreck-versus-ruined-castle rhetoric discussed at the beginning of this article. And yet, in spite of all the tiresome and dissatisfying elements, Beethoven does seem to have found at least some portions of *Fidelio* more successful than their predecessors in *Leonore*.

In a recent discussion of *Fidelio*, Lewis Lockwood comes up with a few examples of what Beethoven might be referring to as *satisfying patches*: "a tightening of the discourse, much removal of repetitions, splicing of adjacent phrase units to move the action forward, and sharpening of contrasts."[72] All of these elements found powerful application in the final revision of the act 3, scene 2 finale, where Beethoven shortens, tightens, splices, and sharpens, as intensely as he did in the other parts of the opera. And these changes often have a powerful effect on the didactic announcements, in that they make them more meaningful and therefore more emphatic. This is particularly evident in the final rendition of the 1814 "O welch' ein Augeblick" section, which I have noted. Beethoven did become a more effective moralistic orator by 1814.

A detailed investigation of the didactic aspects in the three versions of the finale thus illuminates some of the previously overlooked meanings of Beethoven's opera, or series of operas. In spite of its prominence, didacticism in Beethovenian works has up to date received only minimal scholarly and critical attention, which contributed to the numerous misconceptions about the nature of earlier and later *Leonore* operas. Such lack of attention suggests that modern audiences, critics, and scholars perceive as dated and insincere the early-modern idea of using large public works of art as a means of moral education. For example, in a discussion of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Richard Taruskin has pointedly explained that the belief in the power and sincerity of openly didactic artworks became suspect in the twentieth century, because "we have our problems with demagogues who preach to us

about the brotherhood of man. We have been totally burned by those who promised Elysium and given us Gulags and gas chambers."[73]

Similar to Taruskin, Paul Münch explains that the distrust of early modern modes of moral edification resulted from the abuses of moralistic rhetoric by twentieth-century totalitarian regimes. He uses the quasi-didactic inscriptions at the entrances to Nazi concentration camps, such as the infamous maxim "Arbeit macht frei" (Labor makes you free), as compelling examples of such abuses.[74] Perhaps it was these cynical maxims that prompted late twentieth-century scholars to overlook the homilies in *Leonore* and *Fidelio* or treat them as mere platitudes—and thus to overlooked their aesthetic and political importance.

The admirable inventiveness with which Beethoven's music pushes idealistic messages across the footlights indicates, however, that Beethoven subscribed with unchanging verve to the idea and the possibility of theater as a moral institution. For him, the road to Elysium had not yet been burned.

Notes

Martin Nedbal joined the Department of Music at the University of Arkansas in 2009 after finishing his PhD in musicology at the Eastman School of Music. For his dissertation on the treatment of didacticism and morality in the singspiels written and produced in Vienna around 1800, he received the Alvin H. Johnson AMS 50 Fellowship from the American Musicological Society as well as the Alfred Mann Dissertation Award from the Eastman School of Music. His research interests include opera theory, musical and cultural nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe, and puppet theater. His articles and reviews appeared in the journals *Current Musicology*, *Acta Musicologica*, and *Eighteenth-Century Music*. E-mail: mnedbal@uark.edu.

1. Emily Anderson, ed. and trans., *Letters of Beethoven* (London: Macmillan, 1961), letter no. 469, 1:450.

2. Anderson, *Letters of Beethoven*, letter no. 479, 1:455.

3. Beethoven himself preferred to call all three versions of the opera *Leonore*, thus stressing the real name of its heroine rather than the name she assumes in order to deceive the jailor Rocco and his daughter Marzelline. Nevertheless, every time the opera reached the stage during Beethoven's lifetime producers and theater directors called it *Fidelio*—possibly to avoid confusion with Ferdinando Paer's opera *Leonora, ossia L'amore conjugale* based on the same subject. Although he was not comfortable with such a title at first, Beethoven eventually gave in and ended up referring to the final version of the opera as *Fidelio*. To honor the composer's vision, the scholars who reconstructed the earlier versions of the opera in the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries titled the products of their labor *Leonore*. For an early discussion of the problems surrounding the titles of the individual versions, see Otto Jahn, "Leonore oder Fidelio?," in *Gesammelte Aufsätze über Musik* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1866), 236–59; and Erich Prieger, *Zu Beethovens Leonore: Sonderabdruck der Vorrede zum Klavier-Auszuge* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1905).

4. The ambiguity of Beethoven's letters contrasts with the endorsement of *Fidelio* in documents that surround the advertising campaign through which Beethoven and Treitschke promoted the 1814 *Fidelio*. Manuscript copies of the earlier operas circulated around Central European theaters, and the creators wanted to ensure that as many theater directors and music lovers as possible would purchase the scores of their latest revision. Thus on 1 July 1814, Beethoven published a note in the journal *Wiener Zeitung* in which he announced that a vocal score of his new opera would be appearing shortly in an edition by Artaria. In the note, he stresses that this work "is completely different from a previous [version], since hardly any musical piece remained the same, and more than a half of the opera has been composed anew." Cited in Willy Hess, *Das Fidelio-Buch* (Winterthur: Amadeus, 1986), 96. In contrast to the letters to Treitschke, Beethoven's advertising note does not hint at any kind of discomfort about the problematic relationship of the revised opera to its predecessors. It also distorts the true extent of Beethoven's revision—apart from the overture, the concluding chorus to act 1, the final allegro portion of Florestan's aria, and the new opening of the act 2 finale, the revised opera did not feature any entirely new compositions.The promotional campaign did not succeed, as Treitschke later noted with resentment. See Friedrich Treitschke, "*Die Zauberflöte*, *Der Dorfbarbier*, *Fidelio*: Beitrag zur musikalischen Kunstgeschichte," in *Orpheus: Musikalisches Taschenbuch für das Jahr 1841*, ed. August Schmidt (Vienna: Franz Riedl's Witwe & Sohn, 1841), 264.

5. Otto Jahn's preface cited in Willy Hess, "Vorwort," in *Supplemente zur Beethoven Gesamtausgabe*, ed. Willy Hess (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1966), 11:x.

6. See Hess, *Das Fidelio-Buch*, 201–12, for his formalist discussion of the act 2 finale.

7. See Lühning's articles "Vom Mythos der *Ur-Leonore*," in *Von der* Leonore *zum* Fidelio*: Vorträge und Referate des Bonner Symposions 1997*, ed. Helga Lühning and Wolfram Steinbeck (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2000), 41–64; and "Fidelio in Prag," in *Beethoven und Böhmen: Beiträge zur Biographie und Wirkungsgeschichte Beethovens* (Bonn: Beethoven-Haus, 1988), 349–91.

8. Winton Dean, "Beethoven and Opera," in *Ludwig van Beethoven: Fidelio*, ed. Paul Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 44.

9. Paul Robinson, "Introduction," in *Ludwig van Beethoven: Fidelio*, 3–5.

10. Jens Brincker, "*Leonore* and *Fidelio*," in *Festskrift Jens Peter Larsen* (Copenhagen: Wilhelm Hansen, 1972), 368.

11. Michael Tusa aptly summarizes the complexity of the situation when he asks:"Is *Fidelio* best regarded as (1) a single work that after much trial and error achieved a final version that supersedes all prior versions . . . , as (2) three different but equally authentic 'works' corresponding to the three productions supervised by the composer, or as (3) a fluid entity embodied not only by a number of discreet stages marked by landmarks like composer-sanctioned performances and publication but also by preliminary and intermediate manuscript versions?" See Michael Tusa, "Beethoven's Essay in Opera: Historical, Text-Critical, and Interpretative Issues in *Fidelio*," in *The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven*, ed. Glenn Stanley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 201–2.

12. For a discussion of how the finales of *opere buffe* involve alternating sections of action and reflection, see John Platoff, "Musical and Dramatic Structure in the Opera Buffa Finale," *Journal of Musicology* 7, no. 2 (1989): 191–230.

13. Tusa aptly points out, in "Beethoven's Essay in Opera": "With the suspense lifted, Treitschke's Act 2 Finale functions principally as a cantata-like celebration of justice, freedom, and Leonore's great accomplishment, fittingly set in the full daylight of the prison courtyard" (207).

14. Numerous scholars and critics have commented on the effectiveness and assertiveness of Beethoven's moralizing in this section of the finale. Willy Hess refers to this moment as Don Fernando's "gospel of goodness and human love" and claims that it represents "one of the most beautiful and inspired moments of the whole opera, and not only this particular opera." Hess, *Das Fidelio-Buch*, 210–11. Alfred Heuss sees in Beethoven's setting of Don Fernando's maxim an example of what he calls *Humanitätsmelodien*, melodies that have the ability to turn their listeners into better human beings, simply on account of being heard. Heuss, "Die Humanitätsmelodien im *Fidelio*," *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 91 (1924): 551. Maynard Solomon, furthermore, interprets this moment as an esoteric reference to the Masonic concept of brotherly love. Maynard Solomon, *Late Beethoven: Music, Thought, Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 153.

15. See Wye Jamison Allanbrook, *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart: Le nozze di Figaro and Don Giovanni* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 157–60; and Michael Beckerman, "Mozart's Pastoral," *Mozart-Jahrbuch* (1991): 93–102.

16. I discuss some of these in my "Mozart as a Viennese Moralist: *Die Zauberflöte* and its Maxims," *Acta Musicologica* 81, no. 1 (2009): 123–58.

17. Richard Will, "Time, Morality, and Humanity in Beethoven's 'Pastoral' Symphony," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 50, nos. 2–3 (1997): 322–26.

18. Even the chorus seems to disengage itself from the onstage reality at this moment. At the beginning of the finale, Beethoven provides separate musical lines for the four-part mixed chorus of the people ("Chor des Volkes") and the three-part male chorus of the prisoners ("Chor der Gefangenen"). At the moment of the choral response to Fernando's maxim, Beethoven shifts to a single, four-part chorus ("Chor"), and he stays with this marking until the end of the opera. This shift from two choruses to a single one creates the impression that the original mass of onstage characters has metamorphosed to an impersonal medium, akin to the moralistic chorus used in ancient Greek tragedies.

19. Dean seems to have missed all of these statements when he claimed that "there is no homily to the audience from Fernando or anyone else" within the 1805 finale. Dean, "Beethoven and Opera," 36.

20. For a facsimile of the 1805 libretto, see *Fidelio/Leonore: Annäherungen an ein zentrales Werk des Musiktheaters, Vorträge und Materialien des Salzburger Symposions 1996*, ed. Peter Csobádi, Gernot Gruber, Jürgen Kühnel, Ulrich Müller, Oswald Panagl, and Franz Viktor Spechtler (Anif and Salzburg: Mueller-Speiser, 1998), 493–552.

21. No complete copy of the 1805 opera survives since the original manuscript scores have been used for the subsequent revisions. What appears as the 1805 *Leonore* in the Beethoven *Gesamtausgabe* is actually a construct put together by generations of scholars

from sketches, orchestral parts, and from crossed-out sections that remained in the manuscripts of the later versions of the opera. Notwithstanding the 1805 score's lack of authorial authenticity, I use it for my analysis since scholars who reconstructed it believe that it closely represents Beethoven's musico-dramatic ideas around the premiere in 1805, if not what the work actually sounded like during its three performance at the Theater an der Wien. Even students of the later versions of the opera have to deal with uncertainties about the exact form of the musical text. For a more extensive discussion of the open-ended nature of *Leonore/Fidelio*'s score, see Tusa, "Beethoven's Essay in Opera," 201–2; as well as Albrecht Riethmüller, "Die Einheit des Musikwerks in der Vielfalt seiner Fassungen (aus Anlaß von *Leonore/Fidelio*)," in Lühning and Steinbeck, *Von der* Leonore *zum* Fidelio, 25–40. The most readily available reconstruction of the 1805 score is Willy Hess's edition in *Beethoven: Leonore, Oper in drei Aufzügen: Partitur der Urfassung vom Jahre 1805*, vols. 11–12 of *Beethoven. Supplemente zur Gesamtausgabe* (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1967).

22. This text belongs to the middle section of the finale, which I do not discuss extensively in this article and therefore do not provide a table with the texts side by side. For a chart listing the 1805 and 1806 texts, see Hess, *Das Fidelio-Buch*, 277–325.

23. The D-flat major can retrospectively be seen as a root-position Neapolitan chord. Its sudden arrival, nevertheless, is intensely disruptive.

24. For a facsimile of the French libretto, see *Fidelio/Leonore*, 415–52.

25. Pierre Gaveaux, *Léonore; ou, l'amour conjugal, fait historique espagnol in deux actes* (Paris: Frères Gaveaux, 1798).

26. The chorus that concludes the opera, for example, sings: "La main des dieux sèche nos/vos/tes larmes. / Célébrons tour-à-tour / le pouvoir et les charmes / de la constance et de l'amour!"

27. Sonnleithner intensified the moral rigor in other portions of the opera as well. See esp. Martin Ruhnke, "Die Librettisten des *Fidelio*," in *Opernstudien: Anna Amalie Abert zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Klaus Hortschansky (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1975), 121–40.

28. I discuss numerous adaptations in my "Morals across the Footlights: Viennese Singspiel, National Identity, and the Aesthetics of Morality, 1770–1820" (PhD dissertation, Eastman School of Music, 2009).

29. Christine Siegert, "Brüderlichkeit als Problem: Zur Rezeption von Luigi Cherubinis *Les deux journées*," in *Early Music: Concepts and Ideas: Proceedings from the II. International Conference in Musicology, 11–14 September, Krakow, Poland* (Krakow: Institute of Musicology, Jagiellonian University, 2008), 306–35. Many thanks to Kristina Muxfeldt for bringing this study to my attention.

30. Lewis Lockwood, "Beethoven's *Leonore* and *Fidelio*," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 36, no. 3 (2006): 474. Tusa, in "Beethoven's Essay in Opera," proposes that the scene does not necessarily entail political content but "is primarily intended symbolically, as a euphoric metaphor for the Austrian people's own sense of liberation from the anxieties and hardship of the Napoleonic wars" (207).

31. See Nicholas Mathew, "Beethoven's Political Music, the Handelian Sublime, and the Aesthetics of Prostration," *19th-Century Music* 33, no. 2 (Fall 2009): 110–50.

32. The 1806 libretto has been published in Helga Lühning, ed., *Leonore: Oper in zwei Aufzügen von Ludwig van Beethoven: Das Libretto der Aufführung von 1806* (Bonn: Beethoven-Haus, 1996). The musical score of the 1806 version is in *Leonore: Oper in zwei Aufzügen, zweite Bearbeitung (1806)*, ed. Willy Hess, vol. 13 of *Ludwig van Beethoven. Supplemente zur Gesamtausgabe* (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1970).

33. Carl Dahlhaus did point out, however, that the 1814 finale retains a touch of ambiguity about the monarchist system. By showing how the king (through Fernando in his opening recitative) grants amnesty to the other prisoners, the finale suggests that not only Florestan but also the other inmates were incarcerated unjustly, and that "behind Pizarro, who uses his position for mere personal revenge, there loom the dark, shadowy outlines of an unjust state [represented by the king], where political opponents are thrown into gaol *en masse*." Carl Dahlhaus, *Ludwig van Beethoven: Approaches to His Music*, trans. Mary Whittall (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 182.

34. A sudden change in dynamic and expressive marking—from the choral *allegro* to *un poco sostenuto*—further enhances the effect of this musical accentuation, as do the couple's smooth, lyrical vocal lines, which contrast with the declamatory, jagged exclamations of the chorus.

35. For an intriguing consideration of the passage as an instance of group meditation, see Joseph Kerman, "*Augenblicke* in *Fidelio*," in Robinson, *Ludwig van Beethoven: Fidelio*, 133–36.

36. Robinson, "Fidelio and the French Revolution," in *Ludwig van Beethoven: Fidelio*, 88.

37. Maurer Zenck illustrates the importance of maxims in everyday life in the case of Mozart who wrote a lot of them into the family albums of his friends and acquaintances. Claudia Maurer Zenck, "Einige ungewohnte Bemerkungen über die *Zauberflöte* oder: Pamina waltzt, Tamino sitzt im Wirtshaus," *Die Musikforschung* 57 (2004): 48.

38. Maynard Solomon, *Beethoven* (New York: Schirmer, 1998), 112–13.

39. E. Kerr Borthwick also points out numerous similarities between certain statements by Beethoven and an even more openly moralistic work by Plutarch—his *Moralia*. See E. Kerr Borthwick, "Beethoven and Plutarch," *Music & Letters* 79, no. 2 (1998): 270.

40. Anderson, *Letters of Beethoven*, letter no. 51, 1:60.

41. Solomon, *Beethoven*, 53

42. Ludwig van Beethoven, *Konversationshefte*, ed. Karl-Heinz Köhler, Grita Herre, and Günther Brosche (Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1972), 1:235.

43. An abrupt switch in instrumentation further distinguishes the moment from the preceding sections of the finale—the string-dominated texture gives way to a woodwind chorale accompanied by string pizzicatos topped by a prominent oboe solo. As many critics have pointed out, the melody dates back to the fourth movement of Beethoven's 1790 *Funeral Cantata on the Death of the Emperor Joseph II*, WoO 87. The cantata presents Joseph II as the God-chosen prophet who has led humans out the darkness of prejudice and bigotry into the light of divinity. By critiquing prejudice and bigotry, the cantata advocates allegorically for a moral and religious transformation of society. Joseph II figures as the main hero of the allegory, one who, like Leonore and Florestan, sets an example to be followed by others, and the use of the same oboe melody in the

opera's finale emphasizes this connection. The lyricism of the opening, the oboe solo, and the general content of the prayer also reference the Duet and Chorus, no. 30, from Haydn's *The Creation*.

44. Heuss, "Die Humanitätsmelodien im Fidelio," 546.

45. Scholars and critics often dismiss the 1806 opera as a product of uncritical downsizing of the original score, which audiences, reviewers, and probably also Beethoven himself thought to be too long and repetitive. Not surprisingly, the negative views of the 1806 cuts appear mainly in the writings by the pro-*Ur-Leonore* scholars. Complaints about the length and repetitiveness of the 1805 version had already cropped up in contemporaneous reviews of the opera. The correspondent of the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* remarks, in a review published on 8 January 1806, that "the text repeats itself endlessly." Cited in Alexander Wheelock Thayer, *Thayer's Life of Beethoven*, rev. and ed. Elliot Forbes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), 1:387. Also the reporter for the Leipzig journal *Zeitung für die elegante Welt* did not like the fact that the third act of the 1805 version was "sehr gedehnt und die Musik, ohne Effekt und voll Wiederholungen" ("too lengthy, and the music was without effect and full of repetitions"). Cited in Hess, *Das Fidelio-Buch*, 62. Michael Tusa reflects on Beethoven's own views: "The significant shortening of musical pieces in the 1806 version suggests that Beethoven saw a major flaw in the length of the first version." Tusa adds that "whatever opinion one may hold about the cuts—whether they represent unfortunate mutilation of an organic whole or salutary pruning of undramatic padding—the version of 1806 also comprises revisions the merits of which are beyond debate." See Tusa, "Beethoven's Essay in Opera," 213–14. In his account of the meritorious cuts, Tusa does not mention any passages from the act 2 finale, though one can imagine that he would include them in that group.

46. Yet the 1814 conception of the moment does not completely recover the 1805 spirit. The 1814 opening of "O welch' ein Augenblick" especially invites the interpretation that the soloists are expressing their personal reactions to the onstage happenings. No such possibility exists in 1805 where Leonore is allowed to sing a mere two words ("O Gott") before blending in with the other soloists. In this particular moment, the 1805 version achieves greater emphasis on collectivity, whereas the 1814 version stresses individuality. For a more detailed exploration of the more individualistic spirit of the 1814 "O welch' ein Augenblick" beginning, see Dörte Schmidt, "'Geschwinder würde ich etwas neues schreiben, als jetzt das Neue zum alten': Die Skizzen zum II. Finale von 1814," in *Von der* Leonore *zum* Fidelio, 213–14.

47. See Willy Hess, "Neun vergessene Takte im zweiten Finale des *Fidelio*," *Schweizerische Musikzeitung* 108 (1968): 14–16.

48. See Solomon, *Beethoven*, 56.

49. The famous melody with which Beethoven set the maxim brings out its didactic meaning effectively. At the beginning of the second couplet, for example, Beethoven repeats the word "nie" three times to stress that no matter how often the phrase is sung, it will indeed *never* generate an amount of gratitude and jubilation that could measure with the heroism of Leonore's actions. Similarly, the highest note of the phrase coincides with the word "hoch" to stress the intensity of the praise.

50. One of the most emphatic proclamations of this dictum, which also implicates theater in the spread of wisdom from the educated to the lower classes, appears in

Friedrich Schiller's famous 1784 inaugural address to the German Society of the Palatinate in Mannheim, titled at first "What Can a Good Standing Theater Actually Accomplish" and revised later as "A Consideration of Theater as a Moral Institution": "Die Schaubühne ist der gemeinschaftliche Kanal, in welchem von dem denkenden bessern Teil des Volks das Licht der Weisheit herunterströmt und von da aus in mildern Strahlen durch den ganzen Staat sich verbreitet. Richtigere Begriffe, geläutere Grundsätze, reinere Gefühle fließen von hier durch alle Adern des Volks; der Nebel der Barbarei, des finstern Aberglaubens verschwindet, die Nacht weicht dem siegenden Licht" ("The theatrical stage is a public channel, through which the light of wisdom streams from the intellectual, better part of the nation, and from which it spreads in mild rays throughout the whole state. More correct expressions, refined principles, purer sentiments flow from here through all the veins of the nation; the mist of barbarity and dark prejudice disappears, the night yields to the victorious light"). Friedrich Schiller, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Gerhard Fricke and Herbert G. Göpfert (Munich: Carl Hanser, 1967), 5:819.

51. The two canons set only the maxim's second couplet, which brings out the reference to singing in the text.

52. Beethoven's approach to the two versions of Sonnleithner's text contradicts Robinson's claims that "Beethoven's argument in the final section [of the opera's finale] is musical rather than textual" and that "the text merely supplies an excuse to add the heft and sonority of a hundred-voice choir to the orchestral goings-on." Robinson, *Ludwig van Beethoven: Fidelio*, 90. Besides the musical argument, Beethoven's compositional rhetoric is pushing a didactic message.

53. For a discussion of the interpenetration of opera and oratorio in the eighteenth century, see Nicholas Temperley, *Haydn: The Creation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 1–8. For an insightful commentary on the similarities in the treatment of didacticism between eighteenth-century *opera seria* and sacred works, see Don Neville, "Opera or Oratorio?: Metastasio's Sacred 'Opere Serie,'" *Early Music* 26, no. 4 (1998): 596–607. For a discussion of the political significance in Beethoven's appropriations of Handel and Haydn's sacred music styles, see Mathew, "Beethoven's Political Music."

54. Platoff, "Musical and Dramatic Structure of the Opera Buffa Finale," 226.

55. Pia Janke, "Das *Leonore*-Libretto 1806 im Kontext der Aufklärungsdramatik," in *Von der* Leonore *zum* Fidelio, 79–91.

56. Dahlhaus, *Ludwig van Beethoven*, 184

57. In Lessing's *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, see chapters 2–4. In Schiller's writings, the most extensive discussion of delivering edifying messages to the audience occurs in two essays from 1792, "Über den Grund des Vergnügens an tragischen Gegenständen" and "Über die tragische Kunst," and in his 1795 "Über das Naïve."

58. A good overview of German theories of theatrical didacticism in the mid-eighteenth century is Kurt Wölfel's "Moralische Anstalt: Zur Dramaturgie von Gottsched bis Lessing," in *Deutsche Dramentheorien: Beiträge zu einer historischen Poetik des Dramas in Deutschland*, ed. Reinhold Grimm (Frankfurt: Athenaeum, 1971), 45–122.

59. For an extensive recent discussion of Schlegel's theories of didacticism and national theater, see Michael J. Sosulski, *Theater and Nation in Eighteenth-Century*

Germany (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007), esp. 37–44. See also Wölfel, "Moralische Anstalt," 104–6.

60. Schlegel asserts, for example: "Wenn es [das Theater] lehrt, so thut es solches nicht wie ein Pedant, . . . sondern wie ein Mensch, der durch seinen Umgang unterrichtet, und der sich hütet, jemals zu erkennen zu geben, daß dieses seine Absicht sey" ("When the theater instructs, it does not do so as a pedant, . . . but as a person, who educates through his own exemplary behavior, and who carefully conceals his intent to educate"). Cited in Wölfel, "Moralische Anstalt." 106.

61. Cited in Sosulski, *Theater and Nation in Eighteenth-Century Germany*, 24.

62. See esp. Janke, "Das *Leonore*-Libretto 1806," 85.

63. In Letter 26, for example, Sonnenfels compares the French play *Le Joueur* by Regnard (performed in Vienna between 1768 and 1772) to the Viennese adaptation of Edward Moore's *The Gamester* (performed in Vienna through the 1760s and 1770s). He complains that the ending of the French play lacks a moral maxim. He finds the manner in which the English play finishes much more to his liking because of its explicitly didactic statement. See Joseph von Sonnenfels, *Briefe über die Wienerische Schaubühne* (Graz: Akademischer Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1988), 154–60. In Letter 28, however, Sonnenfels warns against "dry moralizing" (166–67).

64. See Nedbal, "Mozart as a Viennese Moralist."

65. Christoph Willibald Gluck, "Dedication for *Alceste*," trans. Eric Blom, in *Strunk's Source Readings in Music History: The Late Eighteenth Century*, ed. Wye Jamison Allanbrook (New York: W.W. Norton, 1998), 200.

66. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Goethes Werke: Hamburger Ausgabe in 14 Bänden*, ed. Erich Trunz (Munich: Beck, 1981), 9: 286–87.

67. See Elmar Bötcher, *Goethes Singspiele* Erwin *und* Elmire *und* Claudine von Villa Bella *und die opera buffa* (Marburg: N.G. Erwert, 1912), 66–73. Bötcher claims that the reduced didacticism was a result of Goethe's admiration for and desire to emulate *opere buffe*.

68. Dahlhaus's main point about Beethoven's opera, especially in its 1814 incarnation, is that it represents a "clash of styles," a mixture of the sentimental and the bourgeois-tragedy impulses. Dahlhaus's argument thus prefigures my own understanding of the three finales as playing out a clash of two opposing impulses within eighteenth-century conceptualizations of theater and didacticism.

69. Similar to theater aestheticians, late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century educators debated the most effective ways of moral instruction and called for abandoning the practice of memorizing generic didactic formulas, stressing instead the development of individual moral sentiments. As Wiebke Thormählen has shown, this debate was occurring in Vienna as well and had an effect on how audiences and composers understood instrumental arrangements of large choral pieces, such as Haydn's *The Creation*. See Wiebke Thormählen, "Playing with Art: Musical Arrangements as Educational Tools in van Swieten's Vienna," *Journal of Musicology* 27, no. 3 (Summer 2010): 342–76.

70. See David Charlton, "The French Theatrical Origins of *Fidelio*," in *Ludwig van Beethoven: Fidelio*, 51–67; and David Galliver, "Jean-Nicolas Bouilly (1763–1842), Successor of Sedaine," *Studies in Music* 13 (1979): 16–33.

71. Anderson, *Letters of Beethoven*, letter no. 481, 1:456.

72. Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven: The Music and the Life* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003), 341.

73. Richard Taruskin, "Review: Resisting the Ninth," *19th-Century Music* 12, no. 3 (Spring 1989): 250.

74. See Paul Münch's "Introduction," in *Ordnung, Fleiß, und Sparsamkeit: Texte und Dokumente zur Entstehung der "bürgerlichen Tugenden"* (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1984), 9–38.

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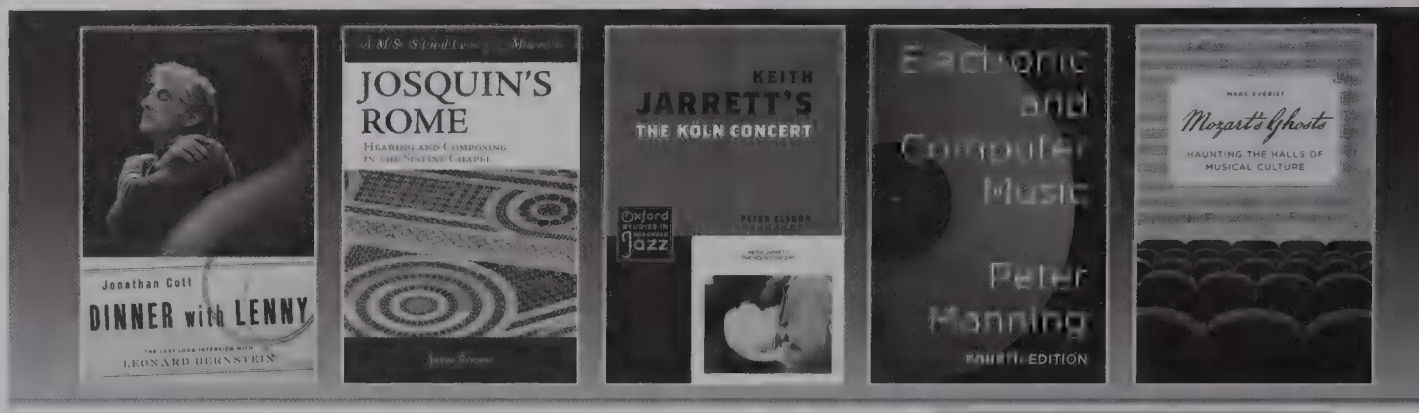

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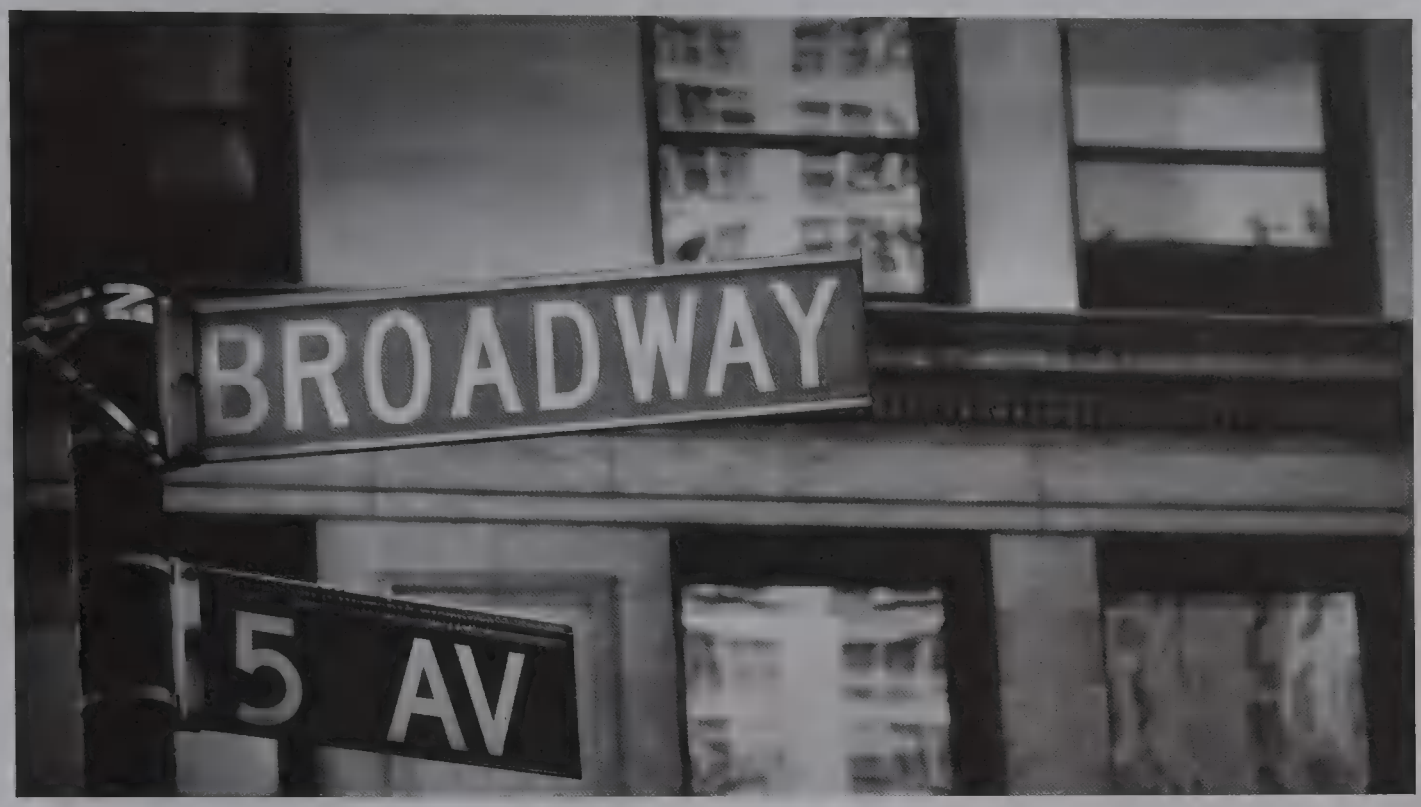

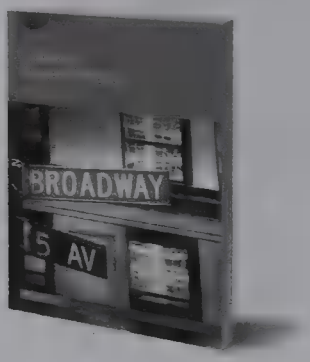

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Editors

Dominic Symonds
University of Portsmouth
dominic.symonds@port.ac.uk

George Burrows
University of Portsmouth
george.burrows@port.ac.uk

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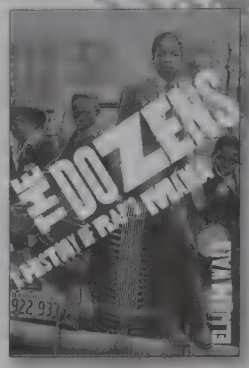

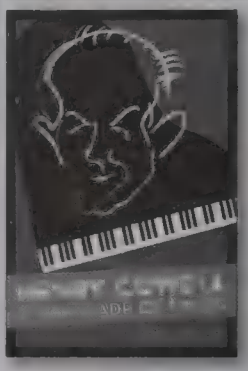

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